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Mordechai accepts inquiry proposals

By ARREN O'SULLIVAN

While it has not yet determined why two Yasur (CH-53) helicopters collided on February 4, the Ivory board of inquiry on Friday issued a series of recommendations to change procedures for flights carrying soldiers to Lebanon.

In its 10-page interim report, submitted to Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, the commission recommended that helicopters fly separately instead of in formation to reduce the risk of collision.

"We are completely adopting the commission's recommendations and these recommendations will be fully implemented," Mordechai said at a press conference Friday afternoon, attended by Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and OC Air Force Maj.-Gen. Eitan Ben-Eliah.

Mordechai immediately passed copies of the report to the government and the families of the 73 soldiers who died in the crash.

The report did not lay the blame on any person, but it uncovered a number of faults, from lax safety procedures to ambiguous flight instructions.

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, who was briefed in Washington on the report by Mordechai, said it appeared the report was "reasonable and orderly."

"I hope that this report will help prevent accidents like this in the future," he said, but added that he was not aware of any plans for dismissals in the air force.

The report ruled out harsh weather conditions as the direct cause of the crash and also said it was unlikely that arteriosclerosis discovered in one of the pilots in an autopsy was related to the accident.

Maj.-Gen. (res.) Ram Goren, a former deputy air force commander, told Israel Radio that the accident was likely a result of human error, but cautioned against blaming someone to blame.

Some parents reacted angrily to the interim report.

Yoram Alpher, whose son Idan died in the crash, said it turns out that the 73 soldiers were killed simply because of utter disorder.

He leveled criticism at the findings of confusion over who records the flight rosters, and

Continued on Page 2

US: Syria talks still on hold

By HILLEL KUTTLER and news agencies

WASHINGTON - The US is not yet prepared to bring to Syria proposals discussed with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu for restarting negotiations, a senior US official said Friday.

"We'll continue to explore what ideas will form the basis for the resumption of talks. Forty-eight hours of the prime minister's visit has not yet produced the magic formula to advance."

"What we'll have to do is fully discuss this with the Israelis."



President Bill Clinton gets some pint-sized advice Friday from Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's two children, Yara, left, and Yair, 5, as their mother, Sara, looks on. The three stopped in at the Oval Office at Yair's request on their way to lunch with first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. Commenting on his sons' meeting with the president, Netanyahu said: "I have not yet received a comprehensive briefing on these discussions. It appears the cat was also involved in them," referring to the Clintons' cat, Socks.

Madeleine Albright said that she has no intention of going overboard in coaxing Damascus back to the talks, an Israeli official said.

"We made it clear there's not going to be any chasing, and Madeleine made it clear she's not either. She indicated they were not going to chase after [Syrian President Hafez] Assad," the Israeli official said.

Netanyahu, in his address Friday, cautioned Assad to rein in Hizbullah, but did not condition the resumption of negotiations on such a move.

"We have not made the cessation of the proxy war against us... a precondition for the resumption of the talks. I could fairly well do that. I could say, 'We will not begin the talks unless Syria stops the proxy war that it can stop against us,'" Netanyahu said.

"If President Assad has taken, truly, a strategic decision for peace, we would expect him to disavow war as an option. But he has not discarded the option of violence in Lebanon, and we expect him to do so."

"And if President Assad does decide, soon I hope, that he chooses the path of peace, he will find us reasonable and cooperative partners. If he chooses the path of violence, he will leave us no choice but to defend ourselves and to defend our interests. I think such a choice on his part will be a prescription for tragedy."

Israeli officials said Netanyahu delivered the same message to Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich and other Congressional leaders with whom he met on Thursday night following his White House meeting.

On the Palestinian track, Netanyahu said Friday that during his more than three-hour talks with Clinton, he presented maps that were "not prescriptive but descriptive of our security needs."

Netanyahu did not reveal to Clinton how he views a final territorial agreement with the Palestinians, or even what the three IDF redeployments over the next 18 months would look like, but instead offered a security overview of "what Israel can live with and what it cannot," the Israeli official said.

Yesterday, Netanyahu braved a chilly Manhattan morning to attend services at an East Side synagogue before meeting privately with US Jewish leaders.

Among those in Netanyahu's entourage, which was heavily guarded, were Israel Ambassador Eilahu Ben-Elissar and Israel Consul-General Colette Avital.

PM to Arabs: Re-educate youth, Page 2

"We're fully engaged," he said.

There was a possibility of US special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross holding a follow-up meeting on the matter with Netanyahu in New York last night or this morning. Netanyahu is scheduled to depart for Israel this afternoon.

In a speech on Friday to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy the prime minister said that if talks resume, "obviously, we will take note of" Damascus's previous discussions with the Labor government but that he "cannot be bound by speculations and theories and hypotheses" from those talks.

A member of Netanyahu's delegation said that in the premier's meeting Thursday with President Bill Clinton, Netanyahu stated that he would resume the talks on the basis of three elements: The US letters of invitation to the 1991 Madrid peace conference, the "general basis" of UN resolutions 242 and 338, and "taking note" of previous Israeli-Syrian talks.

The term "general basis" does not mean it is applicable to territorial compromise on the Golan Heights, the Israeli official stated. That it might be was an idea proffered in some circles prior to Netanyahu's visit here, most prominently by Foreign Minister David Levy.

Meanwhile, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Shara said yesterday that Israel was running away from peace and that Syria was willing to resume peace talks as long as they started where the previous round left off.

"There is no Syrian obstinacy, as Netanyahu claims, and Syria is not distancing itself from the peace process or its elements as some

Ivory Commission recommendations

The following are the recommendations made by the Ivory Commission:

- CH-53 helicopters ferrying forces for reinforcement or to exchange soldiers at positions in south Lebanon on dark nights will fly alone or will maintain very large distances between them, to reduce the danger of them colliding or crossing into each other's flight paths.
- An authorized leader must be designated in missions in which two or more helicopters are flying in the same direction in the same area.
- Clear rules must be made regarding the practice of flying without lights.
- Regulations must be set regarding flashing beacons on the CH-53.
- Make sure that regulations regarding the flight areas and combat registers are followed. Commanders should also designate a person responsible for checking equipment and ammunition placed on the helicopters.

Arrish O'Sullivan

Kfar Ruppin man: I'm Albright's cousin

US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who said she recently discovered her Jewish roots, may be surprised to hear she also has Israeli relatives.

Czech-born Haim Korbelt of Kfar Ruppin, who immigrated here in 1939, said yesterday he is a first cousin of Albright's father, Josef, and had written Albright's family a letter shortly after World War II in an attempt to contact relatives who had survived the Holocaust.

"My father and Josef's father were brothers and I remember Josef's parents very well," Korbelt said, in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

"After the war I received a letter from a distant cousin who had moved to Brazil and it included Josef's address in America, so I wrote him a letter but he never wrote back," Korbelt said.

"I understood when I didn't receive a reply that Josef didn't want to keep in touch," said the

74-year-old Korbelt.

Korbelt, who grew up in Bron, Czechoslovakia, said he last saw Albright's grandparents — his uncle and aunt — shortly before moving here in 1939. Then, Albright's father brought home his bride-to-be to meet the family for the first time.

"I remember Josef and his parents very well, though we didn't meet them many times. Prague was far from Bron and we saw them once a year," Korbelt said.

Korbelt said another cousin, Josephina Gruber, lives in Givatayim. Gruber came to Israel in a transport of Jewish youth in the early days of the Nazi invasion

of Czechoslovakia and also tried unsuccessfully to contact Albright's father after the war.

Korbelt, who only recently learned that Albright was the daughter of his cousin Josef, said he was proud of his famous relative.

"It's a nice feeling to see that a relative has achieved such success," he said. He added that he'd like to meet the secretary of state but has no plans to write to her.

"If there is interest on her part to renew ties I would be happy but I don't think I'll try [to write] again because...we don't want to force ourselves on her," Korbelt said. (AP)

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NEWS

in brief

PLO office in Washington ordered closed

The PLO's Washington office has been ordered closed due to US regulations over the organization's operations here. President Clinton's authority to waive legal restrictions on US relations with the PLO expired on February 12 and he may not take action on the matter until February 21. The office must remain closed until then.

But a senior US official said the law will "have absolutely no consequence" on continued US relations with the Palestinians and refers only to "the suspension of the office and certain [other] undertakings."

However, a phone call to the office Friday found it still operating. *Hillel Kuttler*

Boy dies from shortness of breath

A four-year-old boy died of shortness of breath in his parents' Beit She'an home yesterday, in what police said was a death caused by unnatural causes. Police are to submit an autopsy request to court today in order to determine the exact cause of death. *Itim*

Woman found dead by young son

A 14-year-old boy found his mother dead in their Tiberias home yesterday, after a party had taken place there the night before. Police have not ruled out foul play in the 38-year-old woman's death. The woman's husband and another woman were detained for questioning. *Itim*

Israel Railways workers on strike

A strike by Israel Railways workers that began last night is to continue today, the busiest day of the week for rail travel. The strike was called to protest the planned privatization of Israel Railways, aimed at dividing the Railways and Ports Authority into two companies. The workers want to be consulted on the matter, to ensure their rights will be protected. *Itim*

Golan Druse mark anniversary of strike

Golan Heights Druse on Friday marked the 15th anniversary of their general strike against the extension of Israeli law to the region. Shops, schools and business in the villages were closed and most of the residents did not go to work. Police were on duty in Majdal Shams and the other villages in cases of any disturbances, but the day passed quietly. A stage was erected on the Syrian side of the border, opposite Majdal Shams, from where messages of support and encouragement were shouted on loudspeakers by Druse and Syrian officials to residents of the Golan Heights village. *David Rudge*

Motorcyclist seriously injured

A motorcyclist was seriously injured yesterday afternoon when he crashed into the door of a parked car which someone opened as he drove down a Kiryat Gat street. The cyclist was thrown from his motorcycle and suffered serious head injuries. He was brought to Beersheba's Soroka Hospital. *Itim*

Haredim try to block capital's Rehov Bar-Ilan

Hundreds of haredim stoned policemen who tried to prevent them from blocking Jerusalem's Rehov Bar-Ilan yesterday. Other haredim threw garbage, spit at and cursed policemen, and later set garbage bins on fire.

Four cars' windshields were damaged by the stones, including those of two police cars. The police reported that several policemen were injured and treated on the scene. Four people were arrested.

Deputy Mayor Haim Miller sent a letter to the State Attorney's Office and the Supreme Court asking when the court would rule regarding the street's future, saying the delay in deciding was causing unnecessary tension. *Itim*

Decision due on whether to indict MK Zucker

The State Attorney's Office is to decide whether to indict Meretz MK Dedi Zucker regarding his alleged illegal involvement in obtaining funding for the Camera Obscura film school. The police fraud squad turned over its findings to the State Attorney's Office last week. However, investigators did not make any clear recommendations on whether or not to indict. Instead, it offered two opinions, one saying there was not enough evidence to indict Zucker, while the other said he could be indicted.

The case involves suspicious Zucker used his standing as an MK to obtain Education Ministry funding for the school, from which he received a salary as chairman of its fund-raising association. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

Senior Chinese official visits

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Li Langqing, vice president of the Council of the People's Republic of China, is to arrive in Israel today for a four-day visit designed to improve trade relations between the two countries, China's Tel Aviv-based spokesman announced Thursday.

"This visit, which was arranged a long time ago but was postponed due to Mr. Langqing's busy schedule, aims to increase economic trade relations between the two sides," said Yuebang Zhang, first secretary at the Chinese Embassy. "Trade between the two countries is quite small, but it is increasing."

Bilateral trade between China and Israel, which began in 1992 following the initiation of diplomatic rela-

importing \$159m, while exporting \$81.5m, in goods to China in 1996.

Israel's main exports to China are machinery, chemical products and optical medical equipment. Leading imports include chemical products, machinery and textiles.

During his stay, Langqing will participate in the ground-breaking ceremony of ECI Telecom's Ofakim plant, visit the Dead Sea Works and take a tour of the Diamond Exchange in Ramat Gan.

Langqing will meet with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, President Ezer Weizman, Finance Minister Dan Meridor, Foreign Minister David Levy and Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky.

Our very dear SONJA AVIAD

widow of Dr. Yeshayahu Aviad, passed away Saturday in her 100th year. Her funeral will take place at the Sanhedria Cemetery today, Sunday, February 16, 1997, at 1 p.m. Her sons: Yakov and Eva Aviad and daughters Hamar and Rivka Aviad and daughters Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Enat, Gofar, Raab, Be'ert and Ariel families. Shiva at 87 Ben Malmon Avenue

PA, Israel to set timetable for implementing security issues

By LAMIA LAHOUD

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators will meet today to discuss the timetable for the negotiations to be conducted by the committees discussing implementation of the remaining issues of the interim agreement.

The most important issues are those relating to security, according to Mohammed Dahlan, head of the Palestinian Authority's Preventive Security Service in Gaza. Dahlan is one of the Palestinian negotiators on the security committee.

The security committee is dealing with issues like the safe passage for Palestinians between Gaza and the West Bank, the

Palestinian airport and sea port in Gaza, passage into Israel, such as through the Erez and Karni crossings from Gaza, and external crossings, like Rafiah and the Allenby Bridge, Dahlan said.

According to Dahlan, the two sides should be able to reach agreement on these issues within the next two months.

Maj.-Gen. Abdel Razak Yahya, who heads the Palestinian delegation to the security talks, said the safe passage issue is almost resolved.

The remaining problem is the location of the crossing point in the Ramallah area. The PA wants the checkpoint at Mevo Horon, which is close to the Green Line, while Israel is insisting that it be further

inside the territories around Beit Horon.

"The location of the checkpoint is important, because it will in some way influence the location of the future borders in the final status talks," Yahya said.

Concerning the Gaza airport, the remaining differences are over who has the overall responsibility for security there, he said.

Israel, he said, wants to apply the same principle that applies to the border crossings, where they are in charge of overall security. The PA, on the other hand, is insisting on taking charge of security at the airport, because it is inside Area A, in the south of the Gaza Strip where the PA has full security responsibility, he said.

According to a PA official, the PA understands that Israel wants some say in the security at the airport. The official said some arrangements could be worked out as long as the PA keeps overall security responsibility at the airport.

Meanwhile, PA council member Marwan Barghout welcomed the release of the women prisoners, but said it was important that other prisoners who should have been released under the Oslo accords also be released soon. These prisoners include the sick, elderly, minors and those who have completed two-thirds of their sentence, he said. The PA and Israel have agreed that their justice ministers be in charge of the matter.

Bill would block intifada claims

Israel will propose legislation that would prevent thousands of Palestinians wounded by IDF troops during the intifada from receiving compensation, Channel 2 reported yesterday.

The legislation, called "The Intifada Injuries Law," would also cancel compensation claims already filed in Israeli courts.

It is likely to be met by angry responses from both Palestinians and human rights groups.

Channel 2 reported that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu recently gave the go-ahead to the Justice Ministry to prepare the proposal.

The law would exempt Israel from paying compensation to Palestinians wounded during the uprising except in "special humanitarian cases," where the awards would be capped at a specific, yet undetermined sum, Channel 2 said.

According to Channel 2, the legislation would create a committee headed by an Israeli judge to deal with each case individually. Hundreds of Palestinians have claims of up to a billion shekels piling in Israeli courts. (AP)



Finance agreement signed

Treasury Director-General David Brodet and Palestinian Economics and Planning Minister Nabil Shaath shake hands Friday after signing an agreement that resolves mutual financial claims. The Palestinians promised to pay debts within two weeks to Bezeq and to Israeli hospitals and to come to an agreement with Mekorot on water supplies within three months. Israel promised to remit NIS 105 million to the PA for overdue VAT rebates and to resolve other claims.

PM to be questioned this week in Bar-On for Hebron affair

By Jerusalem Post Staff

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is to be questioned by police this week about the process through which Roni Bar-On was appointed attorney-general, as the investigation into the alleged "Bar-On-for-Hebron" affair continues.

Netanyahu, who is returning from the US tomorrow, will be asked about conversations and other contacts regarding the appointment that he had with others including Shas MK Aryeh Deri and Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi.



The investigators also plan to ask Netanyahu who lobbied for the appointment of Bar-On, and whether anyone tried to pressure him with regard to the appointment.

During this week and next, 10 more people are to be questioned about the affair, in addition to the 20 who have already been questioned. Among those to face the police are

officials in the Prime Minister's Office and the head of the Israeli Bar Association, Dror Hoter-Yishai, who is said to have discussed the Bar-On appointment with some of those said to be involved.

Several of those already questioned, including Deri, Hanegbi, businessman David Appel, Prime Minister's Office Director-General

Avigdor Lieberman, and Bar-On himself, are expected to be questioned again.

Some of those to be questioned in the coming days are to be questioned under caution as suspects. Police sources said they are trying to identify someone as the "weak link" who they can convince to turn state's witness and reveal more details.

Sources in both the police and the State Attorney's Office say evidence gathered so far supports the suspicion that crimes, including fraud and breach of trust, were committed by some of those involved in the affair.

INQUIRY

Continued from Page 1

ambiguous procedures on turning off aircraft lights.

Alpher also speculated that if there had been a co-pilot instead of two navigators, the pilot's mistakes could have been averted.

The inquiry panel is headed by David Ivry, former Defense Ministry director-general and air force chief, and includes Maj.-Gen. (res.) Amos Yaron, a former top paratrooper commander, Maj.-Gen. (res.) Ben-Zion Farhi, past president of the Military Court of Appeals, Brig.-Gen. Shmuel Eldar, a former helicopter commander, and retired judge Haim Shapira.

The commission was given 45 days to present its findings, but was asked by Mordcheai to submit an interim report after 10 days.

Ben-Eliahu said the Yasur squadrons had returned to full activity, but were now flying under increased safety restrictions.

"The most important thing about the interim report is to read its recommendations, since they are not aimed at giving a complete picture of the incident or level any blame in the incident, but ... to recommend what steps have to be taken as soon as possible and not wait for 45 days before we can start flying more safely and prevent such incidents in the future," Ben-Eliahu said.

The commission questioned 37 witnesses, visited the site of the

crash and met with members of the helicopter squadrons in its investigation.

According to the interim report, a number of faults were detected, but it noted that none of them could be determined to have directly caused the accident. It said there were no "black boxes" installed in the helicopters nor were there any voice recorders.

The investigation said the two helicopters were to fly in "open formation," from the Mahanayim air strip to the Lebanon border and then separate, each to its own destination. It said that neither helicopter was designated "leader" of the formation and that neither pilot was sufficiently trained to be a leader.

The pilots were briefed before takeoff on extinguishing aircraft lights, which was to be done before crossing the border.

According to squadron practice, each was to have examined the other by trading places to make sure all lights were out. This policy was instituted to reduce the chance of the enemy spotting the helicopters. The inquiry found that the procedure for extinguishing lights was ambiguous.

The inquiry also found that the officer responsible for registering the flight roster did not arrive at the airstrip, thus no list of passengers remained on the ground. The list of victims was put together from the soldier's units waiting for them in Lebanon, the inquiry said.

President Ezer Weizman on Friday made the last of his visits to the families of the victims of the collision.

Netanyahu renews call for Arabs to re-educate

By HILLEL KUTTNER

WASHINGTON - For the second time in eight months, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has Arab envoys here crying: Stop paranozing us!

In his address to Congress last July, Netanyahu struck a nerve when he called on the Arab world to re-educate their youth toward peace with Israel. On Friday, it was more of the same.

"True peace comes from the heart, or more precisely it comes from a change of heart. And there can be no change unless the educators and intellectuals and spiritual leaders of the Arab world join us in calling for the acceptance of Israel," Netanyahu told a forum of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

"Where are you? Why are you holding up the normalization? Why are some of you stopping the normalization as we progress toward peace? Why don't you move forward? Why don't you prove that you can bring your people to peace?" he asked.

To this, Egyptian Ambassador Ahmed Maher Sayed said afterward: "What is this nonsense? I think he has an obsession with education."

Tunisian Ambassador Azouz Ennifer said: "On a personal level, I think he had some good and clear ideas. On the other hand, it looked like all the responsibility was on the Arab side."

CPI up 0.4%

The Consumer Price Index rose a relatively low 0.4% last month, the Central Bureau of Statistics announced Friday.

The slightly lower-than-expected rise in the CPI marks the eighth consecutive month in which the country's main inflationary indicator has risen by less than 1%. Since June, consumer prices have increased a relatively moderate 3.5%.

Last month's largest price increase, 0.7%, was registered in the housing category, which contributed 0.2% to the general index's rise.

Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel expressed his satisfaction with the January CPI, and said that the last eight indexes indicate that the government is meeting its annual inflation target of 8% to 10%.

An expected cost-of-living increase of 0.7% is to be paid in February's salaries. *Jerusalem Post Staff*

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N.Korean defector to South shot

From Post news agencies

SEOUL - A North Korean defector to South Korea has been shot and injured by two gunmen in an attack apparently ordered by the communist state, a senior police officer said.

The defector, Li Il-nam (known in South Korea as Lee Han-yong), is a nephew of North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's girlfriend, he said.

Meanwhile in Beijing and with images of the defector in mind, China said yesterday it could take "a very long time" to defuse a standoff caused by the defection to South Korea of a very senior North Korean official.

China's Foreign Ministry sought again to distance itself from the defection of Hwang Jang Yop, saying it was primarily up to the two Koreas to resolve his case.

Hwang, the highest-ranked North Korean ever to seek asylum in Seoul, has been held up in the South Korean consulate in Beijing since Wednesday, so strictly speaking he is "in fact now in South Korea," Foreign Ministry spokesman Guo Chongli said.

It so happens that the embassy is in Beijing, so that talks directly involve North Korea and South Korea," Guo said.

"Sometimes such incidents will take a very long time," Guo, speaking to reporters in Singapore, referred to the standoff in Peru, where Tupac Amaru guerrillas have held 72 hostages inside the Japanese ambassador's residence for more than eight weeks.

Guo did not say, however, whether China wanted the two Koreas to hold face-to-face talks, which could delay any resolution of the crisis, given the tensions between the Cold War-era rivals.

China tightened security yesterday around the consulate housing Hwang, and a North Korean delegation arrived in Beijing, presumably to try to get him back.

Chinese officers with AK-47 rifles and helmets patrolled in the early morning on the streets around the consulate, an armor-plated sedan waited outside its front door, and a six-wheel truck with water cannons and mesh-covered windows was parked nearby.

Police stretched rolls of spikes to puncture car tires across sidewalks on the approach to the consulate and blocked roads with their cars. Helmeted officers with bulletproof vests also waited in a van, and extra police were posted around the tower block in another part of Beijing that houses the South Korean Embassy.

The extra security came after a car with North Korean diplomatic plates sped toward the police cordon, stopped a few

meters short and drove away Friday night. North Koreans have tried twice to get past police and were waiting at intersections around the consulate again yesterday.

Their government claims Hwang was kidnapped and has warned it would retaliate.

Guo, who was in Singapore with Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen for an Asia-Europe meeting, said Qian may have spoken again yesterday with Yoo Chong-ha, his South Korean counterpart.

Hwang, slight and bespectacled at 72, is a member of North Korea's highest decision-making body, the Central Committee of the Worker's Party, and a leading ideologue who once tutored Kim.

More than any previous defector, Hwang would be able to reveal to the rival government in Seoul the inner workings of Pyongyang's communist leadership.

Tajik rebels humiliate hostages

MOSCOW (Reuters) - A Russian mediator said yesterday that Islamic rebels holding Russian and Western hostages in Tajikistan had humiliated their captives and he doubted whether a negotiated release deal would be honored.

"A very strong doubt appears...that they will return the hostages. They (the rebels) have simply deceived the whole world community," Gennady Sizov, a Russian diplomat in Tajikistan who mediates in the crisis, told Russian Television.

Asked whether he knew about the state of the hostages, Sizov replied: "They are in a very, very bad shape. They are humiliated, morally and physically. They have been tied." Sizov was speaking after the rebels, led by brothers Rizvon and Bakrom Sadirov had failed to keep their part of the deal and release 11 Western and Russian hostages.

The hostages still held by the rebels include three UN observers — two from Switzerland and one from Ukraine — four workers with the UN refugee agency, two Russian television journalists and the Tajik security minister, Saidamin Zakharov.

The first hostages were captured early last week and the minister was abducted last weekend

when he flew in to negotiate. Late on Friday the rebels freed three of the hostages — two Russian women journalists and a driver.

Under the deal mediated by Russian officials, the Tajik government flew to Tajikistan from Afghanistan 35 supporters of the Sadirovs.

All the fighters, armed, have been freed and allowed to reach Sadirov's base mountain base in a rocky region about 80 km from the Tajik capital Dushanbe and overlooking the village of Obigam.

After the last group of fighters reached the Sadirov base, they were expected to set the remaining hostages free and let them walk about km down the mountain to Obigam where Russian and Tajik government negotiators were waiting.

It was at that moment when the rebels apparently switched off their communications and their intentions remained unclear.

A spokesman for Tajik President Imomali Rakhmonov said earlier yesterday the fighters might withdraw to the mountains and take the hostages with them.

A Russian Television journalist said movement had been seen at the base and the rebels appeared to be loading their weapons into a truck.

Clinton hails telecoms pact

From Post news agencies

WASHINGTON - President Bill Clinton, hailing a landmark deal to open global telecommunications markets, said yesterday the United States would reap significant economic benefits.

"Today's agreement will bring clear benefits to American workers, businesses and consumers alike — new jobs, new markets and lower prices — and will spread the benefits of a technology revolution to citizens around the world," the president said in a statement issued by the White House.

In Geneva negotiators from about 70 countries agreed yesterday on a new global agreement to open telecommunications markets. The deal is expected to lower the cost of phone calls and improve technology.

The agreement was reached at the World Trade Organization only hours before a midnight deadline. The last stumbling bloc was removed when the United States — the only holdout in the talks — said it was happy with other countries' liberalization offers.

The deal would phase out monopolies and restrictions on competition that have allowed telephone companies to "overcharge for calls and given them little incentive to improve services."

"We have reached an accord which will open the \$750 billion

world telecommunications market to American companies," US Representative Tom Bliley said in a statement.

The United States walked out of the talks last April, claiming that other countries had not done enough to open their markets. The talks were only saved by a decision to extend the deadline 10 months.

Some US Congress members have made it clear they are unhappy about the 46.7 percent cap on foreign ownership, while the United States offers 100 percent.

Mexican and South Korean offers also restrict foreign ownership to under 50 percent and Japan has restricted foreign participation in its main two telephone companies to 20 percent.

Telecommunications is one of the most dynamic sectors of the world economy. Trade barriers have been blamed for preventing technological gains being passed on to the consumer.

For instance, it costs an estimated 2 cents per minute to provide a transatlantic phone link — the same as a local call. European consumers pay about \$2 per minute. Calls in India cost about 29 times more than in the free markets of the US.

Customers could gain \$1 trillion dollars over 14 years, according to some estimates. The developing world would also gain from improved telecommunications technology.

Juppe stands by tough immigrant law

PARIS (AP) — Prime Minister Alain Juppe yesterday stood by a tough proposed immigration law as a civil disobedience movement by French film directors widened to include writers, doctors, lawyers, musicians and artists.

Criticized for appeasing the far-right National Front, the law requires foreigners' hosts to report the departure of their guests, and directors promise to ignore the law if approved by the National Assembly.

The debate came during a tumultuous week in which the Front won its fourth City Hall and the directors took a train down to the Front-controlled city of Toulon to protest the mayor's battle with

managers of a public theater.

Juppe yesterday said lawmakers would still consider the immigration law February 25-26, while a growing number of professions launched their own petition drives to protest the legislation. Some called for a barrage of protests on the prime minister's Internet site.

"I think that if one calmly looks at the text, with a bit less passion, one will realize it is balanced," the conservative prime minister told reporters.

Juppe's aides denied a comment by writer Guy Sorman, a Juppe aide, that he believed the prime minister opposed the clause on reporting foreign guests to authorities, calling it "one article too many."



Skinnheads attacked in Berlin. A left-wing youth attacks a group of shaven headed rightwingers after a demonstration of about 500 leftwingers to protest against German neo-Nazis in Berlin's Hellersdorf district yesterday. Several people were injured, German police said. A demonstration of right-wing youths protesting to 'keep jobs for the Germans' was forbidden by German authorities. (Reuters)

Britain repudiates Sinn Fein

BELFAST (Reuters) - Britain yesterday ruled out any further contacts with the Sinn Fein political wing of the IRA, saying the murder of a British soldier in Northern Ireland had made any such meetings "inappropriate."

Northern Ireland Secretary Sir Patrick Mayhew told BBC radio that the soldier's death and an upsurge of IRA attacks in the British-ruled province had made it even more difficult for Sinn Fein to enter all-party peace talks even if guerrillas renewed their truce.

Stephen Restorick, who was shot dead at an army checkpoint last Wednesday, was the second British soldier to be killed in Northern Ireland since the Irish Republican Army declared an end to its 17-month ceasefire a year ago.

Mayhew said that Sinn Fein leader Gerry

Adams had requested a meeting with British government officials last week.

"The government has said since the end of the ceasefire in February that if Sinn Fein wishes to have a meeting with British officials, then depending upon the circumstances and what's happening on the ground that could be arranged."

"But there is no ground for any doubt about our position. In the light of the events of this week it certainly isn't appropriate oow," Mayhew said.

He said words alone from Sinn Fein were not enough to convince people that the IRA would be serious about any new truce in its battle to end British rule of N. Ireland.

"You cannot then come along and say we now declare an unequivocal restoration of our cease-

fire and expect that to be accepted after not only the murder of this young soldier but all the other attempts that have been made (on the security forces)," Mayhew said.

Mayhew said the British government wanted to see Sinn Fein take its place at peace talks which started in June last year but have become bogged down in wrangling and procedural issues.

But he added: "We can't put a precise time to that, you've got to look at all the circumstances, you've got to see whether they still are targeting and researching into new weapons."

Political analysts in both Britain and Northern Ireland believe the peace process is now deadlocked until general elections which Prime Minister John Major must hold by May 22.

Georgia waives diplomat's crash immunity

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, Maryland (AP) — The republic of Georgia has waived diplomatic immunity for a Washington-based diplomat implicated in a car crash that

killed a teenager, the US State Department said yesterday.

Spokesman Nicholas Burns said the next step in the legal process facing George Makharadze is for the Justice Department to file formal charges.

Burns said the State Department will transmit Georgia's official notification to Justice on Tuesday. Tomorrow is a national holiday in the US.

Makharadze's car slammed into two cars waiting at a downtown Washington stoplight on January 3.

Brothers to rule in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (Reuters) - The Pakistan Muslim League (PML) party, which won a landslide victory in general elections this month and has named its leader Nawaz Sharif to be prime minister, chose his younger brother yesterday to rule the country's most populous Punjab province.

The unusual decision followed widespread speculation about the role Sharif's younger brother Shabbaz Sharif could play in the next government after the February 3 election.

Punjab PML president Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain, who himself was candidate for the same office, announced the choice of Shabbaz to be Punjab chief minister at a news conference.

Both Nawaz and Shabbaz are certain to be elected to the two offices because of big PML majorities in the 217-seat National Assembly and the 248-seat Punjab assembly.

It will be the first time in Pakistan that a brother of a prime minister in office will be chief executive in a province.

Shujaat Hussain said the choice of Shabbaz as chief minister would be ratified by the PML's provincial parliamentary group on Tuesday, a day after the National Assembly is to elect Nawaz as prime minister for the second time.

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Clinton keeps American Airlines pilots flying

By TOM STRONG

WASHINGTON (AP) — A strike by American Airlines pilots was just four minutes old yesterday when US President Bill Clinton intervened to prevent the shutdown of a major US carrier at the start of a busy holiday weekend.

While the pilots continue to fly, a three-member emergency board named by Clinton will take 30 days to propose a settlement. The union and the airline then have 30 days to reach an agreement. Failing that, Congress could impose a settlement.

It was not known when the board will meet. Negotiators for the airline and its pilots can continue their independent talks during the "cooling off" period while the board meets, but a strike is not allowed.

Early yesterday, negotiators for American Airlines and its pilots were getting ready to go home to wait for the emergency board to come up with a way to settle their dispute.

American officials said fewer than 100 flights worldwide were affected by the strike that had threatened to spoil the holiday weekend for more than 40,000 travelers. Tomorrow is a national holiday called Presidents' Day, making for a three-day weekend for many workers.

American canceled most overseas flights Friday to avoid stranding planes on foreign soil and started canceling some domestic flights.

American is the second-largest US carrier, behind United Airlines, but flies the most routes

within the country.

American's pilots want raises totaling 11 percent through 2000 and increased stock options. The company has offered 6 percent and smaller stock options. Another sticking point is who would fly smaller jets on commuter routes.

The union wants its members to fly the shorter routes and offered lower pay scales for those flights if the company accepted other demands. American's parent company, AMR Corp., said it wants its American Eagle subsidiary, with lower-paid pilots from another union, to continue flying the commuter routes.

The average American Airlines pilot makes \$120,000 a year. The average American Eagle pilot makes about \$35,000 a year.

The White House announced Clinton's decision at 12:07 EST, after four days of marathon talks produced few results. Four minutes earlier, James Sovich, president of the Allied Pilots Association, had ordered local strike leaders around the country to shut down the airline. That would have stranded up to 40,000 travelers.

Clinton said he acted in hopes of speeding an agreement and because he believed a strike "would have an immediate and adverse impact on the traveling public." In addition to stranding passengers, the administration said the strike would have cost about \$100 million a day.

To win back business, American and American Eagle announced a fare sale with discounts of up to 50 percent on some fares and promised to double frequent flyer miles for its flights.



American Airlines passenger Margaret Malleston of Fort Worth, Texas, walks with her baggage past picketing pilots outside Terminal 3-E at the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport Friday, just hours before the pilots launched a strike which President Bill Clinton intervened to stop after four minutes. (Reuters)

Shoah memorial debate still rages in Berlin

Mobutu cracks down as Zaire crumbles

BERLIN (AP) — Having agreed years ago on the need to build a national Holocaust memorial in Berlin, politicians, historians, Jewish leaders, architects and other experts were still arguing yesterday over exactly what it should be and where it should go.

"The 'whether' is out of the question," said Rita Suessmuth, president of the lower house of parliament, at the opening of the second of three government-sponsored colloquiums on the subject.

Rather, she said, those present are charged with the task of "somehow, in some way, giving a shape to the incomprehensible." A largely non-Jewish group of industrialists, academics and others argued for years that Germany had a duty to build a prominent national monument to the memory of the Jews killed in the Holocaust. The project gained impetus after the federal government decided in 1991 to move from Bonn to Berlin.

A government-sponsored competition opened in 1994 and attracted more than 500 entries. Berlin artist Christine Jacob-Marks and her team won in June 1995 with a plan for a huge sloping stone plate engraved with the names of the victims.

But Chancellor Helmut Kohl rejected the design as too bombastic, sending everyone back to the drawing board.

Several panel members at Friday's colloquium signed an open letter calling for the memorial to be built on the planned Plaza of the Republic, a green space between the renovated Reichstag building and the new Chancellor's Office, which is under construction.

"The memorial is a political gesture and should be in the place where the political is architecturally represented," said Professor Walter Grasskamp of the Academy of Art in Munich. In addition, he said, the current site will be surrounded by busy streets and lacks the proper atmosphere for such a memorial.

Lea Rosh, head of the citizens' group that is a co-sponsor of the memorial along with the city and federal governments, rejected that

argument. "Why must it be still she asked, referring to the site. 'The Jews in Poland didn't sit in a still place and quietly get killed.' Ignatz Bubis, head of Germany's Jewish community, said he feared that attempts to move the memorial, reopen the competition or redefine the monument would only end up further delaying the project.

He said he prefers allowing the original finalists to rework their proposals and have the jury choose from them. "There will be many unhappy people at the end," he said. "But this discussion has been going on already for eight years now." The cornerstone of the 15 million mark (\$10 million) project is to be laid in early 1999.

The final colloquium is to be held in April.

Nazi Christophersen dead at 79

KIEL (AP) — A former Nazi who published magazines and books denying the Holocaust ever happened has died in northern Germany, police in Kiel said yesterday. Thies Christophersen, 79, had been sought for a decade before he was arrested last month, then released because he was suffering from advanced kidney cancer and too sick to be jailed. A police spokesman, who requested anonymity, said Christophersen died of his illness at a home for the elderly in Kiel. Christophersen was a German SS officer and a guard at Auschwitz. He published the pamphlet *The Farming Community*, extolling *The Auschwitz Lie*, which denies Germany exterminated millions of Jews during World War II.

By TINA SUSMAN

KINSHASA (AP) — Though the front line is hundreds of kilometers away, in Zaire's capital, President Mobutu Sese Seko's government is assuming a warlike stance as both military and political pressures close in.

The government, complaining of "enemy propaganda" and claiming the Zairian army is making great progress in a month-old counteroffensive, issued decrees yesterday banning protests and cracking down on the news media.

Presidential elections promised for May appear increasingly unlikely, with the government saying voting can't occur while part of the country is occupied by Laurent Kabila's rebels.

In the eastern war zone, Kabila is claiming oev progress in his march westward toward the presidential compound at Gbadolite, where Mobutu has been holed up. Yesterday, he threatened to attack the Tingi-Tingi refugee camp - the largest in the area - unless Rwandan refugees be said were being armed by Zaire cleared out.

And in a sign of the public bitterness toward Mobutu, whose neglect of the army is blamed for the rebels' advances, opposition newspapers are openly poking fun at his prostate cancer.

One cartoon Friday in *L'Observateur* shows the gravely ill president, dressed in striped pajamas and a leopard-skin hat, speeding away from Kabila's forces in a hospital bed on wheels, a look of panic on his face. In a corner, with a smug smile, stands Etienne Tshisekedi, the militant opposition leader who has called for talks with Kabila.

Tshisekedi is the only politician to openly support negotiations, but diplomats and politicians say many within Mobutu's circle are privately urging him to talk rather than continue a war that his ill-equipped, untrained army has little chance of winning, many Zairians agree.

"As far as I'm concerned, the only way to get a solution to this problem is through negotiations. We don't need war. We don't want war. We just want a change in this life," said businessman Luke Mkaal, chatting on a crowded Kinshasa street corner as dozens of others nodded in agreement.

"People in this country are tired. They support Kabila, even though they don't know what he will give them." The feeling is that anything would be better than Mobutu, whose 31 years in power have left mineral-rich Zaire among the world's poorest countries.

The pillaging and inefficiency for which Mobutu and his cronies are famous is evident throughout the once-gracious city of crumbling

colonial buildings and slums. Government ministries, even the all-important defense ministry, are housed in decrepit shells of buildings with broken stairways, cockroaches skittering on moldy carpets and bare hulks dangling over rusted typewriters with torn ribbons.

The elevator at the 19-story information Ministry building was out of order most of last week, so the minister didn't go to work. At the Interior Ministry, where foreigners must ask permission to travel throughout the country, applications were piled by the hundreds, each accompanied by \$250 in cash.

It's the fee for the privilege of asking to go somewhere.

"There's no guarantee that permission will be granted — and don't expect a receipt. About the only thing maintained here is the hilltop palace that Mobutu uses on his rare visits to Kinshasa. Its vast lawns are groomed like golf courses and trod only by the dozens of presidential peacocks roaming the grounds.

A one-day strike called by Tshisekedi supporters on Monday shut down the city of more than six million, prompting the Cabinet to announce draconian measures yesterday outlawing public protests and anti-government strikes until the war is over.

Violators, the cabinet warned, would be treated as enemy collaborators.



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Together, we shall overcome.

By HARRY F. ROSENTHAL

SPACE CENTER, Houston (AP) — The keen-eyed Hubble Space Telescope was upgraded yesterday with an instrument so sensitive that it can spot an airplane flying a continent away by merely tracking the motion of its landing light.

The new guidance sensor, a collection of mirrors and lenses that locate a target star and point the huge telescope, replaced one that was nearing the end of its life.

NASA officials were surprised at the extent of damage to the Hubble's insulation, including one rip about 45 cm long. They formed a team to see what could be done about it in the two spacewalks remaining on this visit with the limited repair material aboard the shuttle.

One explanation was that the

thin silverized Teflon outer covering of insulation suffered from seven years of temperature extremes in the 16 day-night cycles the telescope was exposed to. The insulation also suffered numerous hits by micrometeoroids smaller than a BB.

Working in the dark much of the time, their work site illuminated mostly by floodlights built into their helmets, astronauts Joe Tanner and Gregory B. Burchett installed the 210-kg instrument — the size of a baby grand piano — with deceptive ease. The job of removing the old and inserting the new took about three hours.

They could have avoided doing the job during a nighttime pass, but, eager to start, they began the spacewalk an hour ahead of schedule. The US space shuttle Discovery circles Earth once every 90 minutes — nearly half the time in daylight, half in dark-

ness — with flashes of dawn and dusk in between.

They also installed an electronic package for the new guidance sensor and a new data recorder before winding up the second of the mission's four spacewalks.

The spacewalk was officially timed at 7 hours, 27 minutes. The Hubble has been in space since April 1990 and this renovation mission was planned before the original launch. The programmed lifetime of the telescope is 15 years.

To prevent the atmosphere from tugging at the telescope in the next 3 1/2 years when the next servicing mission is scheduled, the shuttle altitude was raised three km by firing the shuttle's small jets. Two more such firings planned for later in the mission will boost the orbit to about 600 km.

A few hours later, the pilots had to boost Discovery's and Hubble's

orbit another half-kilometer to avoid a piece of space junk about 20 cm square. The fragment of a spent Pegasus rocket would have come uncomfortably close to the shuttle and telescope in another 1 1/2 hours, and so Mission Control ordered the crew to fly higher.

The effects of aging in the harsh environment of space were apparent to Tanner and Harbaugh. Insulation around one compartment door had weblike cracks up to 20 cm long. Some insulation was torn loose. And both men reported smudges of yellow paint on their gloves, like the previous day's spacewalkers. The paint apparently came from handrails on the shuttle used by the astronauts to steady themselves outside.

Looking at the underside of the solar panels, the astronauts found several small holes. "That's like somebody shot a small caliber bullet right through it," said Tanner.

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Coping with CF a day at a time

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH

When cystic fibrosis hits a family like a bolt out of the blue, the best way to deal with the genetic disease is to take one day at a time — and to pray that there will be many more tomorrows.

There are some 350 young Israelis with CF, and some families have two or even three children with this inherited disorder. They are fortunate the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation of Israel, headquartered in Ramat Gan and directed by Tova Kamin, was established as a self-help group by parents of children affected by the disease. It now also includes volunteers who have no direct connection to CF. The 20-year-old foundation, which is holding its annual fund-raising campaign this Tuesday, not only provides information, emotional support and loans for equipment to CF families, but also tries to raise awareness of the disease among the general public and the medical establishment.

The disorder occurs when both parents are carriers; they themselves are symptomless, but an average of one out of four of their offspring is fated to have the disease. A genetic defect causes the endocrine glands to produce thick mucus, causing excess sweat with electrolytes and overactivity of the nervous system. The glands most affected are those in the pancreas and the respiratory system, as well as the sweat glands.

The earliest symptom is most often a blockage of the small intestine by thick stool, a long-term cough or repeated upper respiratory infections. Most cases are diagnosed in infancy or early childhood. Sometimes it's a parent who notices the salty taste of the child's skin during a kiss. It's most easily diagnosed by a sweat test which shows high levels of sodium and chloride, and most accurately determined by genetic tests.

There is no known cure, but the patient's life span has been dramatically extended by improved care and medication, including physiotherapy, high-calorie diets, inhalation devices, antibiotics, pancreatic

enzymes and drugs that thin the mucus. Thirteen Israelis with CF have undergone transplants to replace the lung or liver damaged by years of living with the disease, including a 13-year-old boy who had the surgery at Sheba Hospital and is doing well, says Kamin. While only a few decades ago most patients died before the end of adolescence, their chances of a longer life have been greatly enhanced and the oldest living patient here is 51.

Naomi and Yosef Shapiro came on aliyah 10 years ago from New Jersey. The haredi couple, who live in Kiryat Ye'arim (Tzitz Stone) outside Jerusalem, have four healthy children aged 11 to five, and one three-year-old girl, Tova, born with CF. Today she is a bright, frolicking toddler with big brown eyes who jumps on her trampoline (good for dislodging the mucus in her lungs) and brings her family much joy, despite the great investment of time and effort to keep her ahead of the disease. "She has a skip to her walk; she's now a happy child," says Naomi.

"She was born in Jerusalem after a normal pregnancy and delivery," recalls Tova's mother. But the beginning was fraught with worry. At the age of six weeks, she was constantly colicky and hospitalized with respiratory failure. "I noticed she was weak when nursing, and she had terrible stools. She never seemed happy. But she never had a fever, and I never noticed anything salty about her skin. No one could explain the symptoms, and we knew nothing of the disease." Tova was always crying and thirsty. At 11 months, says Naomi, "I was begging for a diagnosis. Finally, after two days in the hospital, we had an answer." Doctors attached an intravenous tube providing the right nourishment, and suddenly she was sitting up and standing.

The couple, who have been married for 12 years, had undergone a Tay-Sachs test, but there was then no gene test for CF; the gene was isolated only a few years ago. They knew of no family history of the disease and had no idea they were both symptomless carriers.

At Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital they found a very caring



Naomi and Yosef Shapiro help their daughter Tova with an inhalation device, one of the ways the life span of cystic fibrosis patients has been dramatically improved. (Karen Benzion)

team that specializes in CF, headed by pulmonologist Dr. Eitan Kerem. They brought in Tova once a week at first, and later the visits became required only once in six weeks. In the waiting room they met couples from different backgrounds and the one thing that united them was a CF child who required great attention and care. The most urgent things are to ensure the mucus doesn't

clog her lungs and cause infections and to prevent dehydration and malnutrition due to the speeded-up metabolism.

PHYSIOTHERAPY sessions, involving intensive clapping on her back, chest and sides, are required three times a day. Their health fund, Kupat Holim Meuhedet, covers the cost of one daily session and the

parents do the rest. "If we're late with a session, I can hear her lungs filling up," says Naomi.

The insurer subsidizes the antibiotics, on which Tova must start at the first sign of a cough, as well as 20 slow-release enzyme pills a day (which she gets down with applesauce) and high-calorie milk shakes.

But there are other costs not

included in the basket of health services, including an air conditioner ("this is certainly not a luxury," says Yosef, a teacher, "because maintaining the proper temperature and preventing dehydration is vital"), an inhalation machine and an assortment of exercise equipment.

Then there is the cost of a parent taking off work to take her to the hospital and the transportation

expenses. They also bought a device called a "flooder," which vibrates the lungs and causes mucus to drop away, partially replacing the need for thrice-daily physiotherapy sessions.

"Now her weight and height are normal, but it's been a struggle. We're really more fortunate than other parents who've had to insert intravenous antibiotics at home and needed to hospitalize their children frequently," the Shapiros add.

Their older children were very concerned, not only about their youngest sister, but also that they too might come down with the disease. They were taken for tests and found to be healthy. "We didn't want to know if they were symptomless carriers, which isn't relevant now. When they're ready to marry, they will take such a test and not marry another carrier," Naomi says.

The close-knit haredi community in Kiryat Ye'arim has provided much practical and emotional support, she adds. "When we were away at the hospital they babysat with the other kids and prepared meals." Once in six weeks Naomi goes to a support group meeting at Shaare Zedek where parents who have been through it all provide practical advice and listen to doctors' lectures and cushion the shock for new families introduced to what faces them.

"When Tova was first diagnosed, our relatives in the US asked us if we'd be going back. But we get great support here; the care here is excellent and up to date and we're thrilled about it," the couple stress. The Shapiros soon plan to take Tova to a nearby pool and teach her to swim. "Doctors say it would be the best thing for her," says Yosef, "because of the moisture that expands the lungs."

Instead of worrying about what lies ahead, they work hard at giving Tova the best preventive care to protect her from lung infections and having to be hospitalized. "We've seen great medical progress over the past few years and there is much hope, even the possibility of curing the disease with gene therapy. In the meantime, we live every day, one at a time."

Rx FOR READERS

'Sell by' is not 'use by'

By POST HEALTH REPORTER

Most food products show a "sell by" date. Should this be considered a "use by" date? I want to know, as sometimes I find that products I buy are close to the "sell by" date, and I want to know if eating the food later may be harmful to health. T.I.G., Jerusalem.

Dr. Brian Coussin, director of the Health Ministry's Food Service Division, answers:

"Sell by" is not "use by." One can consume products anywhere from several days to a few years after the "sell by" date, depending on the type of food. Of course, the sooner you eat food after manufacture, the higher the quality. But even if you eat it some time after the "sell by" date, there is no danger to health. Frozen food, for example, may deteriorate due to the action of enzymes in the product, but the below-zero temperatures prevent bacteria from developing. The only exception to this rule, perhaps, would be dried fruit or other foods that tend to be infested by insects if left for a long period on the shelf, but even these are unlikely to make people ill.

Because other consumers have been confused by the matter you raise, we at the Health Ministry



Manufacturers are now required to indicate a 'use by' date on products. (Zeev Ackerman)

recently amended regulations, in cooperation with the Israel Standards Institution, and are now gradually introducing "use by" requirement instead of "sell by" dates. Manufacturers themselves determine the maximum period for consumption of the product, not us, as they best know what's in it and how long the food remains fresh and edible. As new labels are introduced, manufacturers and importers will be required to give the "use by" date, but they may also display a "sell by" date if they wish.

As a rule, well-refrigerated milk products remain fresh for three to four days, and sometimes even a week, after the "sell by" date.

Frozen foods remain good several months afterwards; canned goods two or three years; and dried products up to half a year.

Rx For Readers welcomes queries from readers about medical problems. Experts will answer those we find most interesting, and replies will be printed in the twice-monthly column on the Health Page. Write Rx For Readers, The Jerusalem Post, POB 81, Jerusalem 91000, fax it to 02-5389527 or e-mail it to jusie@post.co.il, giving your initials, age and place of residence. Phoned-in queries will not be accepted.

Medical knowledge on the Net

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH

The way things are going, the computer mouse will soon be as ubiquitous as the stethoscope in the hands of physicians as they treat their patients. With medical knowledge changing as quickly as a fast-moving river, doctors needing up-to-date information on diseases, drugs and treatments increasingly look to digital media.

The Internet offers a tremendous variety of selections from on-line medical journals and health-related organizations, while CD-ROM versions of reference books find data in seconds.

The latest Israeli entries into this specialized field are the *Israel Physicians' Guide*, the most expansive local Internet site available to doctors, and *Hypermed Pediatrics*, a comprehensive disk on children's medicine available in English with four annual updates.

News of the existence of *The Israel Physicians' Guide*, located at <http://www.doryanet.co.il/ippg/1.htm>, is spreading like wildfire among doctors and others interested in medical fields, even though the commercial firm behind it, Israel Netguide Ltd. of Herzliya Pituah, has not advertised it. According to marketing director Ze'ev Ben-Yitzhak, some 100 to 150 Internet users — the majority of them abroad — go into the English-language site each day. Local users are still a minority, but the guide will soon have a large amount of Hebrew-language Israeli medical news for those who don't feel comfortable enough solely in English, as well as an opportunity for on-line conference calls among local doctors in various fields.

Its search engine for medical journal articles, according to journal, topic, specialty or author, is most helpful. So is the offering called "Worldwide Medical Lists," which has immediate links to hundreds of non-profit organizations and medical societies, as well as profit-making groups relating to almost every conceivable medical topic and specialty. One can get information on "alternative" (complementary) medicine as well as conventional medicine, food allergies, diets, dentistry (including "Ask a dentist a question"), medical ethics and topics like smoking prevention. A detailed listing of scores of Israeli companies manufacturing or selling medical products will be of special interest to users abroad.

Most Israeli hospitals have links to their own Internet site via the "Hospitals" section of the guide. The "Israeli Medical Organization" section contains information on other organizations that pay for inclusion on the site; one is a non-profit drug-rehabilitation group run by Orthodox Jews.

Ben-Yitzhak says he asked the

Health Ministry pharmacy department for its list of all drugs sold in Israel, with information on contraindications and conflicts between drugs. "We offered to take their diskette and put it on our site free. This would have been very helpful to local physicians who can easily access lists of medications available abroad but don't always have their local equivalents at their fingertips." But the ministry, whose staffers have almost no access to the Internet, didn't agree, he claims.

Doctors looking to sell second-hand medical equipment or to find jobs via the Internet can post their information (for a limited period at no cost and then they start paying).

Ben-Yitzhak notes that one of the most popular sections of the site is "Physicians' Matchmaking," in which doctors look for "girlfriends" or "boyfriends" who are themselves physicians or in related health professions. They are asked if they are Jewish or Christian (no Moslem category listed), if they smoke or drink, their specialty, height, weight, eye and hair color and personal interests. Registration is free, as is a three-week trial membership; after that, they pay \$10 by credit card for each six months on the list.

THE ONLY possibly controversial section in the guide is the offer to doctors wanting to set up their own "professional portfolio" on the Net. The guide's charge is \$648 for a year in cyberspace and \$478 for six months.

According to Ben-Yitzhak, although there are restrictions on advertising by Israeli physicians, "our legal adviser approved it." He says the portfolio will include only the doctor's curriculum vitae, with details on experience plus a list of professional publications in medical journals.

Asked to comment, Prof. Eran Dolev, chairman of the ethics committee of the Israel Medical Association, says the IMA has not yet deliberated on the matter of advertising by doctors over the Internet. "I personally am not against doctors advertising if it is within strict limits. Since I have no private practice, I am objective in this matter.

If the doctor doesn't claim he is 'the best' in his field and if his statements on specialties and experience are accurate, I don't have a problem with that. More information is to the benefit of patients. But the IMA will have to discuss the whole issue," he said.

The only major complaint one can have against the *Israel Physicians' Guide* is its horrendous English spelling (serch, Joelish, gynecologist, orthopaedic, ophthalmology and otiology are just for a few examples). Knowing that thousands of doctors abroad see

such misspellings and wonder whether Israelis are illiterate made me cringe. Ben-Yitzhak said that only recently, about a year after the site was launched, did an English-speaking Israeli point out these errors. "Nobody else complained," says Ben-Yitzhak. "But we have assigned a native-born English speaker to go over the whole site and correct the mistakes."

Meanwhile, the *Hypermed Pediatrics* disk is a first — and very promising — effort to distribute up-to-date, accurate information to doctors around the world.

The editor-in-chief of the disk was Prof. Seren Frier, until recently the director of pediatrics at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital. He consulted with a prominent international editorial board of pediatricians from the US, Canada, France, Switzerland and Holland.

The disk, which is easily searchable by topic, includes information vital to pediatricians and family physicians on infectious diseases, allergies, the nervous system, neonatology, preventive medicine, neurology, the digestive system and many other topics. There are

immunization schedules, growth charts through the age of 18, normal heart and respiration rates and other items that doctors may have forgotten since leaving medical school. There are also color photographs and ultrasound scan images of specific ailments and conditions.

The Hypermed company, which is based in Jerusalem, offers a year's subscription (comprising four disks, a new, updated one every three months) for \$200. Orders can be made via Hypermed's Internet site at <http://www.hml.com>. Subscribers can also receive on-line information and updates.

Meanwhile, the largest US Internet site for doctors, called Physicians' Online, has agreed to disseminate data produced by Hypermed. So far, nine chapters from the CD-ROM have been put onto the US site and thousands of doctors have accessed it each week. And, as a result of the success of the pediatrics disk, Hypermed plans to issue additional CD-ROMs on other medical specialties.

HEALTH SCAN

Heart attack diagnosed in 15 minutes

By POST HEALTH REPORTER

A diagnostic kit that can tell hospital emergency-room cardiologists, in less than 15 minutes, whether their patients have suffered a heart attack has been approved by the Health Ministry for use. The \$22 kit, which requires the use of a seven drops of blood and doesn't require the use of a laboratory, is imported by the local company Medixon Laboratory, is imported by the local company Medixon Laboratory, is imported by the local company Medixon Laboratory.

The kit looks for the presence of two enzymes, CPK-MB and myoglobin, in the blood; these can signal damage to the heart muscle. Called Cardiac Status, the disposable kit is highly sensitive and accurate, according to Medixon managing director Shmuel Berkovich. It has not yet been included in the basket of health services, but a number of hospitals, including Kaplan in Rehovot and Soroka in Beersheva, have started to use it and Shaare Zedek and Bikur Holim in Jerusalem are planning to introduce it, he said.

to 10 percent of patients who come to the emergency room complaining of chest pains and other possible symptoms of a coronary infarction. "First we do a clinical exam and an electrocardiogram. If the results of these point to a heart attack, nothing more is needed. But if they are not clear enough, we send a blood sample to the lab, which is busy with other things and could take a few hours to return the results. The kit greatly speeds the process up and helps confirm a heart attack. While not a technological breakthrough, the kit is advantageous to such patients, because the sooner the coronary event is identified, the faster they can be treated, and the higher the chances for recovery."

Snir noted, however, that patients are not usually discharged earlier because of the kit, since sometimes the enzymes don't show up until hours later and doctors have to wait to see if they appear.

Prof. Mervyn Gotsman, head of cardiology at Hadassah-University Hospital in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem, said his department has not yet started using the kit.

"It would be very useful but the cost-effectiveness must be determined, and doctors are already performing too many tests on patients."

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In the ballpark

An outside observer might not have been able to see much difference in Washington's reaction to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's fourth visit to the White House in eight short months. But if such things were allowed in polite diplomatic circles, the sound that would have emanated from Washington officialdom this weekend would have been a loud sigh of relief.

For the first time since Netanyahu took office, the Clinton administration feels that it is talking to the Israeli government from the same sheet of paper. On both the Palestinian and Syrian tracks, the Netanyahu government is not at the same place, not taking quite the same approach, as the previous government. But it is clearly, as Americans might say "in the ballpark." As President Clinton said after a three-hour meeting with Netanyahu, the significance of the Hebron agreement went considerably beyond the fate of that one city; it "renewed the partnership between Israelis and Palestinians."

The Netanyahu government has also turned over a new leaf in terms of how it deals with the United States. Until this visit, Netanyahu had not presented a comprehensive picture to the US of the full game plan for the peace process—including the outlines of Israel's approach to final status negotiations with the Palestinians and to a settlement with Syria.

This renewed level of candor with which previous Israeli governments worked with the US is welcome, appropriate, and overdue.

There may well be disagreements with the US over this plan on the long road ahead, but it is highly significant that the Israeli government now has a plan, and that the plan has been presented to Clinton. Now the US is reassured that it has something that can be worked with, and this fact will greatly facilitate the overall American-Israeli relationship.

Netanyahu seems to have succeeded in repairing the relationship with the US by carving out an approach that is consistent with the path of his predecessors, but not identical to it. Slowly but surely, he is defining what the "Likudification" of the Oslo process means in practice. At this stage, Clinton may have a better idea what it means than most of Israel's cabinet, let alone the people of Israel.

What is already clear, however, is that Netanyahu is striving for a formula that will keep the peace process alive and well, not one that will cause it to explode or fall apart. It is too soon to tell whether that formula will succeed,

but whatever it is, it seems to be within the range of reason for Washington, and probably will be for the wide majority of Israelis.

Now that Netanyahu has made his pitch, a series of Arah leaders will also visit the American capital over the next month or so. With regard to these meetings, Netanyahu has, in fairness, requested that Washington do what it does best: Persuade these leaders to warm their relations with Israel. The US will push for a restarting of the long dormant multilateral talks, and request that the Arah states take concrete actions to reinforce the peace process.

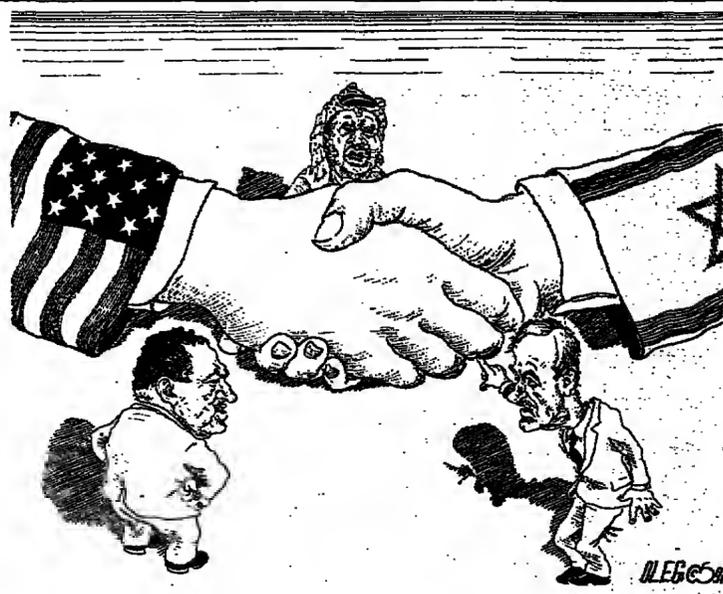
It is about time that the Arah states do so—they cannot expect the Netanyahu government to continue to tear itself apart over the peace process and receive nothing but scowls and threats in return from the Arah world.

This requirement to reciprocate goes not just for the Arah world in general but for Syria and the Palestinians in particular. Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat can no longer act as if Netanyahu's commitment to the peace process is in question. Redeploying in Hebron was a tough pill for Israel to swallow; now Arafat has bitter medicine of his own to take—he must dismantle the terrorist infrastructure of Hamas and other groups opposed to the peace process.

It is not enough to rein in terrorist groups on a temporary basis, while keeping them in reserve for a rainy day. Thinking that the current calm will continue without carrying out Oslo's commitment to disarm militias is shortsighted—the time to act is now, not after, heaven forbid, the next terrorist atrocity.

Regarding the Syrian track, the ball is clearly in Damascus's court. Israel has refrained from linking the opening of talks to Syria ending its proxy war against Israel in Lebanon. Israel has said that it will talk on the basis of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, which is diplomatically for "land for peace." Netanyahu may not be willing to go as far as Peres would have, but the notion of territorial compromise is clearly in the air.

Netanyahu deserves credit for not resting on his laurels from the Hebron agreement. Instead, he cemented US confidence in his commitment to achieving a secure peace with a candid presentation of his vision for the road ahead. The United States will now, it is hoped, do its part in the meetings ahead with Arab leaders. And Netanyahu has the task of explaining his vision to his people at home.



Leaving Lebanon

In military strategy—as in just about everything else that's important—timing is everything. The "right" move at the wrong time can become a disaster in the months and years that follow.

In the public debate over what to do about the war of attrition in southern Lebanon, and in light of the growing rate of casualties, including the horrendous number lost in the helicopter disaster earlier this month, growing emphasis is being placed on the unilateral withdrawal option.

Advocates of this strategy recognize that the continued Israeli presence in the area provides Iran and Syria with an ideal situation for picking off Israeli soldiers one at a time, or waiting for operational accidents to cause even greater casualties.

By getting out, under conditions that we set, the argument goes, Israel can emerge stronger and more secure.

While there is no evidence that Hizbullah will end its attacks on Israel just because the IDF leaves southern Lebanon, the Israeli border can be protected from the Israeli side of the fence. Proponents claim that a sophisticated network of overhead intelligence systems (drones with cameras), can provide real-time intelligence to identify all movement in the security zone.

In response to detected movement toward the Israeli border, long-range and precision guided rockets and helicopter gunships would be able to strike the infiltrators.

At the same time, air force attacks on command positions and ammunition storage areas in other parts of Lebanon, and, in particular, strikes against convoys carrying the weapons to the terrorists, would continue to be necessary.

In tactical terms, this plan, if fully implemented, could succeed. However, precisely because the discussion of withdrawal is taking place in the shadow of the helicopter accident and the recent deaths from Hizbullah attacks, the timing for unilateral withdraw is

GERALD M. STEINBERG

not right, even with the implementation of an alternative security system.

TO SUCCEED, unilateral withdrawal must also prevent any weakening of Israel's overall deterrence.

All the parties on the other side must be made aware of the high price they will pay if they attack

Unilateral withdrawal? It could work. But we have to wait for the right time

Israel, and of the ability and intention of the Israeli leadership to act forcefully—out of proportion, if necessary—against continued Hizbullah attacks.

While such conditions may have existed in the midst of last year's Operation Grapes of Wrath, they do not exist now. During that Israeli counterattack, the terrorist groups were forced to deplete their ammunition, to reveal the sites of secret storage areas, which were then bombed; and they were losing their civilian cover (until the mistake at Kfar Kana).

The Lebanese government, as well as the Syrians, were concerned that the IDF's deep-penetration attacks into Beirut and other parts of Lebanon would end foreign investment and economic recovery. Syria was also concerned with the potential loss of jobs for its "guest workers" in Lebanon.

At that time, Hizbullah was significantly weakened. Strategically, that was the best time to pull out—either unilaterally, with a clear statement of conditions and requirements, or on the basis of a tacit agreement brokered and guaranteed by a third party (the US and/or France).

The overhead intelligence sys-

tem could have been put into place and operation before Hizbullah could react.

In contrast, were Israel to pull out now, it would reap none of the benefits and bear all of the costs.

Throughout the region, withdrawal would be seen as a sign of weakness; it would invite challenges from Iran and Syria, and perhaps even be seen in similar terms by Palestinians and others.

This is not to say that Israel should initiate an escalation process that will lead to a massive attack along the lines of Grapes of Wrath, after which it would make a unilateral exit. However, this process is taking shape anyway, as a result of the steady attacks from Hizbullah.

The main point is that when, as seems inevitable, the IDF has to launch another major attack in Lebanon, the military and political leadership should be prepared to couple a cease-fire to withdrawal, under terms and conditions that are set unilaterally.

After such a demonstration of firepower and determination, the impact of withdrawal on overall deterrence would be minimal, and, in fact, could actually enhance the region's perception of Israeli capabilities.

The bottom line is that while unilateral or tacit withdrawal from Lebanon is the right strategy, the timing is not right now.

The conditions for success must be created first. This does not necessarily require another full-scale military campaign like Operation Accountability or Grapes of Wrath, but it does mean that the IDF will have to take the initiative and inflict significant losses on Hizbullah and their supporters in Lebanon first.

Otherwise, we will all pay a heavy price in the months and years to come.

The writer is a senior research fellow at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies at Bar-Ilan University.

Choose now

LARRY DERFNER

During our almost 12 years in Lebanon's "security zone" (one of the more Orwellian terms in the Israeli political lexicon), 181 Israeli soldiers have been killed. This doesn't include "collateral" deaths from accidents, suicides, etc.

(Incidentally, the number of South Lebanese Army soldiers—our allies—who have been killed comes to 346.)

When one of our soldiers dies up there, we go through a heavy moment or two. When they get killed in groups of three or more, we go through a couple of days of anxiety, and ask: "What can we do, what can we do?" Then we forget about it again.

Now, with 73 soldiers killed on their way to Lebanon, we've experienced an emotional trauma, and in the aftermath we're going through the motions of coming to grips with the situation and trying to find a way out of it.

But this, too, will pass. Even now, especially now, we are afraid to look the devil in the eye.

It's not that we don't have any options in Lebanon, it's that we do—but both options are so repellent that we'd rather not think about them.

The real enemy, everyone understands, is Syria. It is ultimately because of Hafez Assad that our soldiers are getting killed by Hizbullah in the security zone, and only Assad can call Hizbullah off.

But we are unwilling to engage the enemy. We won't do what's necessary to make peace in Lebanon, because that means giving the Golan Heights back to Syria. It means settling the war in Lebanon essentially on Assad's terms.

And while we won't give in to Assad, we won't force him to give in to us, either. We don't fire

On our path in Lebanon, patience is deadly. We can't look away anymore

on-Syrian soldiers in Lebanon, and we certainly don't go into Syria itself, for fear of setting off a full-scale war.

Instead, we decide not to decide.

We tell ourselves that maybe things will work out in the future, and we look away while our soldiers face Hizbullah.

After the helicopter crash, though, this haplessness of ours will not do.

We have to take matters into our hands, and solve this problem like adults.

A NUMBER of MKs have come up with a creative proposal: Forget Assad. He doesn't matter.

If we can just get the US, France, Egypt, Jordan and Morocco to send their soldiers into the security zone, we can bring ours home. That way we won't have to give up the Golan, we won't have to fight Syria, and the war will be over.

The idea is that foreign countries, even Arah countries, will send their armies into southern Lebanon against the will of Hizbullah and Syria—just to protect us.

This isn't creative thinking, it's escapism. It's a continuation of the way we've dealt with Lebanon for the last 12 years.

It doesn't bring the war any closer to an end, but rather prolongs it.

While we dream at home, we cause Assad no pain on the battlefield—and he causes us plenty. He grows stronger, while we grow weaker.

We need to face the enemy and decide whether to fight him or concede. Patience is a virtue only if you're on the right path. On our path in Lebanon, patience is deadly. We need to choose now.

I once wrote in this space against giving up the Golan Heights—without making a single mention of Lebanon.

In this time when no one can ignore Lebanon, I've changed my mind. The Golan just isn't worth sending our soldiers to fight and die for in a corrosive, endless war.

Most Israelis still think like I used to. But now they need to answer the question: What's to keep today's children out of the "security zone" in another 12 years? I don't think they'll answer it, though.

In a very short time, when the memory of the 73 dead soldiers loses its power, the Israeli "home front" will resume its traditional, doomed approach to Lebanon: If we don't think about it, maybe it'll go away.

The writer is a journalist living in Tel Aviv.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE SECULAR

Sir, — As a Religious Zionist who takes pride in the increasing role that this segment of the community is playing in public life, including the military, I believe that the helicopter tragedy and the response of the general public are proof that the post-Zionist, cosmopolitan intellectual elite and its supporters are guilty of a grave injustice against the so-called secular component of our society.

For several years, we have been bombarded with statistics and opinion polls of questionable accuracy, which indicate that motivation among the secular to serve the country is on the wane. Even granting that there may be problems in this area that require resolution, it is evident from the cross-section of young Israelis from every segment of society and social status who met their tragic deaths protecting the northern border, that these data were tendentious and interpreted to meet the prejudices of a particular stratum of our society. It appears that the post-Zionists and their publicists, the opinion makers and distributors of ideas, have been doing nothing more than describing their own feelings and generalizing. Doubtlessly, every form of motivation was represented on that ill-fated mission, from the very altruistic to the very personal-national duty, religious obligation, professional responsibility, group identification, social pressure, personal challenge — to name a few. Certainly some of these should be encouraged and nurtured for the long-term survival of the state. But the bottom line is that young men and women, fully aware that this nation is in a state of war, voluntarily endanger and, sadly, lose their lives defending all of us.

Ginot Shomron.

PRISONERS OF ZION

Sir, — Barshava Tsur's article on the front page of *The Jerusalem Post* of February 7 reports that former Prisoners of Zion subsist on the most meager of living allowances.

Meanwhile, most Israeli youth in this generation have little or no idea what a prisoner of Zion is or was, as they have little exposure to the heroic efforts that we witnessed over a period of more than 20 years, when Jewish heroes from the USSR, Romania, Ethiopia, Argentina and other countries risked their lives for the right to come to Israel and encourage others to do the same.

The highest level of help in the Jewish tradition is to provide an opportunity to make a living.

I am therefore pleased to announce the formation of a Prisoners of Zion Speakers Bureau, so that schools, youth movements, community centers, immigrant organizations, labor unions, businesses, clubs and political groups of all streams can ask the former Prisoners of Zion to speak and appear at seminars to describe this story of Zionism which now escapes our attention. This will also give former Prisoners of Zion the opportunity to earn a living during their years in Israel, after the heavy price that they paid, which so often involved long jail sentences and torture for Zionist activity.

Those interested in inviting lecturers from the Prisoners of Zion Speakers Bureau may write to the undersigned at The Institute for Peace Education, P.O.B. 2265, Jerusalem, or fax me at (02) 623-6470.

SARA ROSENBLUM,
Executive Secretary
Jerusalem.

LONGEVITY

Sir, — I thank Dr. Friedman (Letters, February 2) for his comments about my article on longevity. Unfortunately, he seems to have missed the point of my piece. While we both agree that it is of utmost importance to improve the quality of life of older people, I would direct society's scarce resources

to the significant issues of falls, over-medication, appropriate rehabilitation and institutional services for example, rather than to the trivial concerns of "wrinkles, brown spots and broken blood vessels."

PROF. A. MARK CLARFIELD,
M.D.
Jerusalem.

NO FREE CHOICE

Sir, — Ann Hutchings ("Sick and tired," February 4) makes the point that she has been treated badly here in Israel, simply because she is not Jewish, even though she wishes to stay here.

There is no excuse for rudeness on the part of anyone, least of all government employees. However, any Israeli, new immigrant or not, can point to occasions of being treated rudely or inappropriately by those who are supposed to be helpful. It is not limited to non-Jews who want to live here.

Ms. Hutchings's desire to live in Israel may be very strong. But I think it is important to note that a desire to live in a country, in the world today, is simply not enough. How many people worldwide would like to live in the US, for example, but cannot, because they cannot get work permits or permission to immigrate? The illegal immigration problem in the US speaks for itself.

And how many others would like to live in Europe, but cannot, because, likewise, they cannot work legally, and therefore cannot pay rent or buy food?

Why does Ms. Hutchings feel that Israel should be the only country in the world to freely open its doors to anyone who wants to be here? That we open those doors to Jews, for them to come to their homeland, should not mean that the doors should or could be open to the world. In a better world, perhaps anyone could live anywhere he chose; for now, that world does not exist.

SUSAN CHASIN
Gan Yavne.

THE NEGEV

Sir, — I would like to express my disappointment. I am a former Jerusalemite who moved last spring to Mitzpe Ramon in the Negev. My disappointment concerns the almost total lack of informative articles (on a regular basis) about this area of Israel.

I am sure that readers all over the country would benefit from a more complete coverage of the south and perhaps, as I was, may even be influenced to join us here.

ANNETTE FEIN
Mitzpe Ramon.

POSTSCRIPTS

AUTHORITIES in eastern India may want to rethink security measures at military installations to protect against a BIG threat—elephants.

Two adult elephants strayed from their herd and wandered toward an air force base at Kalaikunda, a key military installation close to the Nepalese and Chinese borders. The animals crashed through three security fences and began smashing everything in their way when they spotted several parked fighter jets.

Try as they might, the elephants were unable to overturn the jets.

A MAN who robbed a Girl Scout and her mother of money and a box of cookies was sentenced to life in prison.

Cleveland Johnson, 29, was proclaimed by the court a habitual offender. His accomplice, John Pellicer, 20, was given an 8 1/2 year term.

The two robbed 8-year-old Lisa Ramon at gunpoint outside a Tampa supermarket, stealing less than \$100 and a box of cookies.

While Pellicer had only a single misdemeanor on his record, Johnson had a long criminal record.

PICTURE POSTSCRIPT



These days even cockroaches are hi-tech. This bug is lugging a backpack containing a microprocessor and electrode set, while conducting experiments for a bio-robot research lab in Tokyo. (AP)

Asia's
can
do
city

Brita
warfar

buy
and keep
in the

Asia's 'can do' city

This is the Can Do City. Need a new airport? No sweat — just flatten an island, roll back the ocean, and put down runways. Mountain too steep? Just put up the world's longest escalator.

With a skyline of stunning architecture, a public housing program that claims to be the world's biggest and a foreign-currency nest egg worth more than \$60 billion, Hong Kong has defied the odds.

This tiny Western outpost on the underbelly of China has survived wars, plagues, Japanese military occupation, and waves of refugees that have swelled its population roughly tenfold in less than 50 years. It has expanded its area by more than 20 percent through landfill, and jammed a whole city onto a mountainside.

A marriage of Chinese entrepreneurial skill and British administrative rectitude has made Hong Kong a financial titan of Asia, where per-capita income and Rolls-Royce ownership is greater than Britain's.

On July 1, that can-do spirit faces its greatest challenge, when 156 years of colonial rule end and China recovers sovereignty over Hong Kong.

It's a march into the unknown. This is not just the largest corporate merger in history, but an attempt by a Communist superpower to absorb a capitalist Mighty Mouse without damaging the legal fabric and civil liberties that made it mighty.

Looking at the booming stock exchange, property market, and those ever-swelling foreign reserves, it's tempting to conclude that Hong Kong is taking even this momentous challenge in its stride. Contrary to the dire predictions, all indicators suggest confidence in the change of sovereignty is high. There is no flight of capital, no mass emigration. The judges still wear wigs, and there's cricket every Sunday.

But the change is felt in pervasive everyday details, like Queen Elizabeth II's head vanishing from the coins, and the British colonial emblem coming off the mailboxes.

Beijing has sought to boost confidence by promising that Hong Kong will remain separate and semi-autonomous, enjoying freedoms that exist elsewhere in China. As China itself points out, why mess with a goose that lays golden eggs?

But China's sweeping promises become vaguer in the details. It has hinted in many ways that it will be less tolerant of dissent than the British were. It keeps a chilly distance from the Democratic Party, which is highly critical of the Chinese government but is also Hong Kong's most popular party. Beijing plans to scrap Hong Kong's elected legislature pending elections in 1998 and to roll back some of the civil liberties laws enacted late in the British colonial era, on the grounds that it wasn't consulted.

This is happening at a time when a new generation of elected politicians is only just beginning to tackle the downside of Hong Kong's economic miracle — poverty, limited union rights, and lack of social security. Now they could find themselves frozen out by pro-business legislators, the kind preferred by China because they keep the profits coming in.

The best Hong Kong can hope for is that while Chinese sovereignty will eventually make it more Chinese, it can keep the best of what it acquired as a colony. As Tung Chee-hwa, the man who will head the semi-autonomous government of Hong Kong, has put it: "Combining the best of the East and the West makes each and everyone of us a better person and in turn makes our society that much stronger."



Hong Kong island view from Victoria Peak. (AP)

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Tung Chee Hwa, who will head Hong Kong's semi-autonomous government. (AP)

Britain conducted germ warfare tests over London

Britain conducted secret germ warfare experiments over London and southern England during the Cold War, the government confirmed earlier this month.

Scientists tested three bacteria which the government said were "completely harmless" in both rural and inner city areas between 1964 and 1977.

"They were bacteria that would act in a similar way to a true biological agent," said Rupert Cazelet.

Cazelet is spokesman for the Defense Evaluation and Research Agency which is responsible for Porton Down, Britain's biological defense establishment.

"But they were harmless, and they were made more harmless by being denatured or killed," he said.

"We were looking to see how they were dispersed and how the air currents carried them around. We were not looking to infect people, absolutely not."

Defense Secretary Michael Portillo confirmed the experiments had taken place in a letter to opposition Labor Party lawmaker Ken Livingstone, which was quoted in *The Sunday*

Telegraph. Portillo said the experiments were designed to "determine the effect of environmental conditions on the viability of organisms."

He stressed that the agents were "judged to present no risk to public health." The scientists used three bacteria: bacillus globigii, killed serratia marcescens, and E Coli 162.

According to Public Record documents quoted by the paper, two types of trials took place. In one, the agents were placed in a box, driven to different locations and released. In the other, they were sprayed into the air.

The Sunday Telegraph quoted several doctors as saying the three types of bacteria could cause infection or illness, but Cazelet stressed that the actual bacteria used in the experiments had been rendered harmless.

Livingstone said the tests were bizarre and called for an independent inquiry with independent doctors and analysts to follow up what had happened to Londoners exposed to the agents.

"These people were flying completely blind when they released those simulants. They

didn't know what they could do," he said.

"They're guessing when they say no one was affected and I'm guessing that people were affected."

No one really knows so we have to have a full independent inquiry."

Biological warfare has been a major concern of the United States and its Western allies since the 1930s.

British scientists released real disease-causing bacteria in a

series of sea trials off Scotland and on Caribbean islands in the late 1940s and early 1950s. *The Sunday Telegraph* said.

In the US, the paper said, the most notorious experiment occurred in San Francisco in 1950 when two naval ships steamed up and down outside the Golden Gate Bridge spraying bacillus globigii and serratia marcescens.

Almost all of the city's 800,000 residents were exposed, it said. (AP)

ON CAMERA

On-line photos

By DAVID BRAUNER



Ben-Ya'acov hopes to make rolls of film obsolete. (David Brauner)

PhotoNet is poised to do for photography what the Internet and electronic mail (e-mail) have done for correspondence. Without leaving your home, you can now send, receive, and order reprints of family snapshots originating anywhere in the world through a home computer.

At the same time that a color film is processed at the store or by mail, for a few dollars more it can be scanned at high resolution and uploaded on the Internet. The customer is messaged via e-mail that the film is online and issued with a roll number and password. "Thumbnails" (small/contact size images) may then be viewed on the computer screen. The images may be enlarged on screen, downloaded onto hard disk, or sent anywhere in the world via e-mail. There is also a "home printing" option (provided your computer is equipped with a specialized printer in 5 1/4 in. bay) that produces surprisingly high quality hard copies.

Recipients can order reprints of the new baby or the graduate simply by filling out an electronic order form. For relatives and friends who don't have computers, PhotoNet sends out a postcard with instructions on how to order by phone. Images remain online for 30 days. A long-term archiving and photo album option is also available.

The PhotoNet concept is the brainchild of Ya'acov Ben-Ya'acov, co-founder and president of PictureVision Israel, and his partners Phil Garfinkle and Elliot Jaffe. Ben-Ya'acov, who divides his year equally between Israel and the US, is in charge of the young company's Israeli-based research and development operations. The US sales and

marketing headquarters are located in Sterling, Virginia. On Camera caught up with Ben-Ya'acov at the firm's new R&D center in Jerusalem's Har Hotzvim High Tech Park.

Ben-Ya'acov, 30, an Israeli-born American, studied robotics and computer engineering at the Jerusalem College of Technology (Machon Lev). His five-year stint in the IDF's Command and Control Systems branch were spent in computing and high-volume information transfer of graphic materials in the field. After the army, he worked as a consultant, and then for two years in international business development for Applicom Systems, where he gained "experience equivalent to an MBA." Here, Ben-Ya'acov also met his partners, Garfinkle and Jaffe, who together decided to form PictureVision in May 1995.

"In the US 750 million rolls of film are processed annually and another 750 million in the rest of the world, of which 300-400 million are processed in Japan, notes Ben-Ya'acov." He says that the American public are willing to pay to be on e-mail in order to commu-

nicate with their families. Statistics also show that 10 percent of clients processing a film in the US opt for an additional \$6 (36 exposures) to have their pictures digitalized on a disk in order to view them on a home computer screen.

Another crucial factor in the PhotoNet equation is that only 2 to 3 percent of customers come back for reprints and enlargements. Ben-Ya'acov estimates that in reality "7 to 20 percent want to order reprints, but over five percent find it too much trouble and too time-consuming to look for negatives and go back to the photo finishers for the service."

However, if through PhotoNet's "sharing environment," people can easily order reprints and enlargements, or create personalized greeting cards and gift items like picture mugs and jigsaw puzzles, any time, anywhere on a computer, an entirely new volume of business is being created.

"If we could raise the reprint rate to 5 percent for every film processed," says Ben-Ya'acov, "the initial scanning could be free." PictureVision has taken on board several of America's largest photo-finishing outlets and some of the top mail-order and wholesale labs, and is presently negotiating with photo-industry leaders. Ben-Ya'acov has also teamed with Plaza Create, a retail chain that controls 10 percent of Japan's photo-processing trade.

Venture capital firms have invested \$5.6 million in PictureVision. Although the PhotoNet technology was successfully tested last August in Jerusalem between a local photo shop and the PictureVision offices, Ben-Ya'acov concedes that Israeli photo finishers will not be equipped for PhotoNet until the end of 1997.

PhotoNet is on the Internet at <http://www.photonet.com> or e-mail yaacov@photonet.com

HEADS 'N' TAILS

A chew worse than a bite

By DVORA BEN SHAUL

A reader has asked what she could possibly do about a young Labrador, some six or eight months old, that simply destroys everything in the house that is within its reach every time it is left alone.

Puppies are notorious for chewing on things and this is no surprise to anyone. Just as toddlers touch and grasp at every item within reach, so a dog takes everything into its mouth, which is its principal sensory avenue. The dog is, in part, making an effort to get acquainted with its environment and to a large extent relieving its boredom when left alone.

As the dog gets older it becomes more familiar with things around it and has less and less need to explore them and the "straight to the mouth" syndrome cases up.

Certain breeds are more avid chewers of carpets, shoes, clothing, books and toys than others — especially young German shepherds and terriers. But some dogs do have this tendency to an exaggerated degree and go on to simply eat everything they encounter.

A few years ago it was customary to X-ray the hips of pups of certain breeds at the age of six months in order to try to weed out those with hip dysplasia. In doing so one usually got a picture of the stomach and intestines as well. It was amazing to find out just what puppies are capable of ingesting. Observers reported everything from nails to small toys.

Surprisingly, none of these pups seemed to suffer any ill consequences from these objects and most of them passed through the digestive tract with no problem. The exception to this seemed to be synthetic materials such as kitchen sponges, which

do cause a lot of trouble and result in intestinal obstructions.

Usually a dog does outgrow such behavior and by a year-and-a-half or so it has settled down. But there are some dogs that do not outgrow this stage and they remain a problem for years. Training isn't always the answer either, although a dog can learn to avoid certain items.

But in the meantime, the only thing that can be done is to limit the dog's access to most of the house by securing it in one place, even a small room where everything that can be destroyed has been put out of reach. Of course, once everything that's to be protected has been removed, the dog should have a good supply of the things that it is allowed to chew. Sometimes this step makes life a little better for everyone concerned until, one hopes, the animal has outgrown these very distressing habits and settled down.

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New Zealand in good shape on Day 2 of Test

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand - New Zealand moved into a strong position at stumps yesterday on the second day of the third cricket Test with England at Lancaster Park.

England was 145-5 at stumps, still trailing the home side by 201 runs with three days to play. Captain Mike Atherton had spent 204 minutes at the crease to be 66 not out, while Dominic Cork was on 16 after 75 minutes.

The pair had stopped a mid-order tumble with an unbroken 41-run stand.

"He's in nothing like his best form, but there's glimpses of his strength of character," England coach David Lloyd said of Atherton.

"He's a very strong personality and he's a lad who is selling his wicket dearly. Now we've got to play sensible and strong cricket, and we haven't done that."

"We batted sloppily, with the exception of Atherton. We've got a lot of work to do for the rest of the game as a result of the way we lost easy wickets in the afternoon. They were airy fairy shots, poor shot selection."

New Zealand, 346 in its first innings, needs to win the Test to level the three-match series.

Lively left arm Geoff Allott picked up three wickets as England's batsmen played a series of loose strokes, finishing the day with 3-49.

New Zealand's innings yesterday, resuming at 229-5, revolved around recalled wicketkeeper Adam Parore and all-rounder Chris Cairns, who added 82 in 103 minutes for the sixth wicket.

Parore reached 59 while Cairns made 57, his second half century in five innings during the series.

Tailenders Daniel Vettori and Heath Davis added a breezy 27 in 33 minutes for the ninth wicket before offspinner Robert Croft finished the innings by taking his fifth wicket.

He finished with 5-95 off 39.1 overs, his best Test figures.

Parore went to his 50 cracking

New Zealand Test Innings

B. YOUNG b Cork 11
 B. POCCOCK c Atherton b Croft 22
 M. HORNE c Thorpe b Gough 42
 S. FLEMING st Stewart b Croft 62
 N. ASTLE c Hussain b Croft 15
 A. PARORE c Hussain b Croft 59
 C. CAIRNS c Stewart b Croft 57
 D. VETTI not out 27
 S. DOORLY not out 1
 H. DAVIS c Hussain b Croft 8
 G. ALLOTT not out 36
 Extras (11, 104, 194) 36
 TOTAL: 346
 Fall of wickets: 14, 78, 106, 137, 201, 285, 310, 327, 346
 Bowling: Dominic Cork 20-3-76-1 (2lb), Andrew Cuddick 32-8-64-1 (2lb), Darren Gough 21-7-0-1 (4lb), Robert Croft 38-1-5-95-5 (10lb), Phil Tufnell 16-5-24-0 (4lb), Graham Thorpe 1-0-0-0 (0lb).
 Overs: 128.1

England Test Innings

N. KNIGHT c Parore b Allott 14
 M. AHERTON not out 15
 A. STEWART c Parore b Allott 65
 M. HORNE c Parore b Allott 59
 N. HUSSAIN c Parore b Cairns 12
 S. THORPE c Parore b Allott 11
 J. CRAWLEY c Parore b Allott 1
 D. COOK not out 16
 Extras (10, 104, 194) 36
 TOTAL: 346
 Fall of wickets: 20, 40, 103, 104
 Bowling: Geoff Allott 12-3-49-3, Simon Doull 10-0-27-4, Heath Davis 12-0-38-0, Daniel Vettori 4-1-7-0, Chris Cairns 9-5-12-1, Nathan Aspinall 3-0-11-1. Overs: 48.

India Test Innings

V. VEDHAIA c Campbell b Whittall 34
 S. TENDULKAR c Flower b Brando 13
 S. GANGULY not out 2
 M. AZHARUDDIN c Flower b Brando 24
 A. JADEJA c Flower b Brando 42
 S. SINGH c Flower b Brando 45
 N. MONGIA c Waller b Evans 4
 A. KARNAD c Campbell b Brando 21
 S. JAYASINGH not out 1
 D. GANDESI c Flower b Brando 1
 V. PRASAD not out 0
 Extras (1, 104, 194) 36
 TOTAL: 346
 Fall of wickets: 1, 13, 23, 3-68, 4-72, 5-64, 6-85, 7-158, 8-138, 9-168
 Bowling: Eddie Brando 8 1 34 2, John Flemie 8 0 29 3, Heath Streak 8 0 32 0, Guy Whittall 8 0 29 1, Craig Evans 8 1 20 1, Paul Strang 2 0 7 0

Zimbabwe Test Innings

A. Flower b Gough 25
 A. Campbell c Atherton b Allott 61
 A. Campbell c Atherton b Cairns 24
 G. Whittall not out 19
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Forest, Leeds FA Cup upset victims

LONDON (AP) - Second Division Chesterfield ousted Nottingham Forest 1-0 and Division One Portsmouth scored a 3-2 win at Leeds yesterday on yet another day of amazing upsets in the FA Cup.

A 54th minute penalty by Tom Curtis after Forest's Welsh international goalkeeper Mark Crossley had been sent off put Chesterfield into the last eight for the first time in its history. The last time it had made the fifth round - the last 16 - was in 1950.

Leeds went into its game against Portsmouth after four games without conceding a goal but let in three to Portsmouth's Alan McLoughlin, Swedish forward Matthias Svensson and Lee Bradbury.

Although Lee Bowyer replied twice for George Graham's team, Leeds was yet another big club to go out.

Already, defending titlist Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal, Newcastle, Tottenham, Aston Villa and Everton had failed to make the last 16 so that Chelsea, which visits Leicester today, has a great chance to win the competition for the first time since 1970.

Wimbledon fell behind to Division One Queens Park Rangers at home but rallied to score a 2-1 victory to make it to the last eight.

After veteran Mark Hateley had headed Rangers in front, Marcus Gayle and Robbie Earle turned the game the Premier League club's way. Brazilian star Juninho scored the only goal as Middlesbrough scored a 1-0 victory at Manchester City.

In a fourth round game, which was held up by postponements and a replay, Blackburn tumbled 2-1 at home to Coventry despite going ahead through Tim Sherwood after only 50 seconds.

Eoin Jess leveled for the Sky Blues and Darren Huckerby fired what proved to be the winner. Veteran Coventry goalkeeper Steve Grigorovic also saved a penalty by Chris Sutton and Coventry oow meets Derby for a place in the last eight.

There was another upset at Birmingham, where the Division One team lost 3-1 at home to Division Two Wrexham, a ousted giant-killer which has ousted teams like Arsenal and West Ham in the past.

After former Manchester United star Steve Bruce had fired his first goal for Birmingham, the Welsh team hit back at St. Andrews with goals by Brian Hughes, Tony Humes and Karl Connolly.

In Premier League action, Arsenal squandered a chance to go top of the standings after a 0-0 tie with north London neighbor Tottenham.

Gunnars' goalkeeper John Lukic, replacing injured England star David Seaman, made a series of saves to keep out the Spurs strikers while Ian Walker, who replaced Seaman on the England lineup and was deemed to blame for Italy's goal in the World Cup Wednesday, had little to do.

In the other Premier League game, West Ham fielded its £7.3 million strikeforce of Jon Hartson and Paul Kitson but tumbled 1-0



IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO - Middlesbrough's Derek Whyte (left) tackles Manchester City's Georgi Kinkladze.

at Derby.

Croatian midfielder Aljosa Asanovic scored the only goal from the penalty spot.

Division One leader Bolton, which had a nine-point lead going into the home game against fourth-place Sheffield United, was held 2-2 at home but stretched its lead to 10.

Second place Wolves lost 3-0 at home to Crystal Palace, its seventh home loss of the season.

Defending titlist Rangers scored a 3-0 victory over East Fife to reach the last eight of the Scottish Cup, a scoreline which was unexpectedly low.

East Fife, which has won only one game in Division One and has the worst league record anywhere in Britain, went to the Premier Division giant expecting a high-scoring loss. But it restricted Rangers to goals by David Robertson, Trevor Steven and Ally McCole, all in the first 37 minutes.

PREMIER LEAGUE: Derby 1, West Ham 0; Tottenham 0, Arsenal 0.

FA CUP: Fourth round - Blackburn 1, Coventry 2, Barnsley 0; Birmingham 1, Wrexham 3; Chesterfield 1, Nottingham Forest 0; Leeds 2, Portsmouth 3; Middlesbrough 2, Queens Park Rangers 1.

DIVISION ONE: Bolton 2, Sheffield United 2; Charlton 2, Barnsley 2; Grimsby 2, Huddersfield 1; Norwich 2, West Bromwich Albion 4; Oxford United 3, Oldham 1; Port Vale 2, Ipswich 2; Southampton 2, Stoke 1; Wolves 0, Crystal Palace 3.

DIVISION TWO: Bournemouth 0, Burnley 0; Bristol Rovers 3, Luton 2; Crewe 1, Walsall 0; Millwall 2, Rotherham 0; Notts County 1, Blackpool 1; Peterborough 3, Bristol City 1; Plymouth 2, Barnsley 2; Wycombe 1; Stockport 3, Shrewsbury 1; York 2, Gillingham 3.

DIVISION THREE: Carlisle 2, Brighton 1; Darlington 2, Scunthorpe 0; Doncaster 1, Barnet 1; Fulham 1, Wigan 1; Hartlepool 1, Farnham 1; Hull 2, Exeter 0; Leyton Orient 1, Cambridge United 1; Mansfield 2, Lincoln 2; Rochdale 1, Northampton 1; Swansea 1, Scarborough 2.

SCOTTISH PREMIER

Rangers 29, 20, 4, 2, 85, 21, 54
 Celtic 28, 15, 7, 3, 82, 27, 57
 Dundee United 26, 12, 7, 7, 34, 21, 43
 Hearts 27, 10, 8, 9, 37, 35, 38
 Aberdeen 27, 9, 9, 9, 38, 41, 36
 Dundee 26, 9, 5, 12, 26, 45, 32
 Hibernian 26, 8, 7, 13, 26, 43, 25
 Motherwell 26, 7, 13, 28, 47, 25
 Kilmarnock 26, 8, 7, 13, 29, 50, 24
 Raith 26, 5, 5, 18, 21, 48, 20

SCOTTISH CUP: Fourth round - Brechin 1, Raith 2; Clyde 0, Kilmarnock 1; Falkirk 2, Dundee 1; Greenock Morton 2, Dundee 2; Motherwell 1, Hamilton 1; Rangers 3, East Fife 0.

Leading goalscorers

- (League goals in brackets)
- Premier League**
 Ian Wright, Arsenal, 24 (17)
 Alan Shearer, Newcastle, 23 (20)
 Robbie Fowler, Liverpool, 21 (12)
 Fabrizio Ravanelli, Middlesbrough, 20 (10)
 Les Ferdinand, Newcastle, 17 (12)
 Dwight Yorke, Aston Villa, 15 (12)
 Matthew Le Tissier, Southampton, 13 (10)
 Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, Man. Utd., 12 (11)
 Marcus Gayle, Wimbledon, 12 (8)
 Chris Sutton, Blackburn, 11 (10)
 Leahou Le Tissier, Southampton, 13 (10)
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Swiss, Jews to cooperate on fund

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK - Declaring that confrontation is over, Jewish and Swiss officials vowed on Friday to cooperate in a Swiss humanitarian Holocaust fund, which could begin making payments this summer.

There will be a "timely distribution to victims who are most in need," Thomas Borer, the Swiss Foreign Ministry's envoy, said at a news conference in New York.

Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat, who is overseeing the Clinton administration's review of Swiss-Nazi relations, said the US would act as a facilitator in seeing that the fund is "orderly, organized, transparent and accountable."

Praising the move from confrontation to cooperation, Eizenstat said the process will lead "inexorably to the truth and to justice to the extent [justice] can be done 50 years later."

Eizenstat said a "definite priority" for the fund should be pensions "for the 'double victims' - those of the Holocaust and then of the communist regimes." Survivors in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have been ineligible for reparations

from Germany.

The US will also encourage other European nations to review their war-era relations with the Nazis and to contribute to the Swiss fund or to set up parallel funds.

The humanitarian fund is separate from the claims against the Swiss banks over dormant accounts. The fund is currently a "private" pool, with contributions of more than \$100 million so far from the Swiss banks and businesses.

The Swiss government will be making a decision about whether to contribute to the fund in a few months, after an interim report by its historical commission.

"The mood has brightened," said Edgar Bronfman, president of the World Jewish Congress. "It was getting a little out of hand and emotional," he said of the highly public battle between Switzerland and the WJC.

The organization and allocations of the fund are to be determined in meetings between the Swiss government and Jewish groups, which will begin next week in Bern. Payments will begin this summer, Bronfman said.

"The humanitarian fund should go in the first instance to victims of the Holocaust, Jewish and non-Jewish, where there is an urgency and where so far nothing have been

done, say the Eastern countries, Baltic countries," said Rolf Bloch, president of the Swiss Jewish community, echoing Eizenstat's sentiment.

In stirring testimony to Congress last December, Bloch called for justice for the Jews, but also fairness for the Swiss. "I feel the disposition to fairness has grown," he said Friday in New York.

"The Swiss Jews felt uneasy, uncomfortable when this issue came to light," he said. Now, he said, things will calm down and the new atmosphere will produce results.

"Switzerland is a small country," he said. "Decisions are made by consent, not by

confrontation."

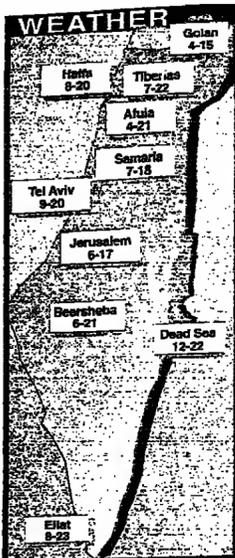
Hovering over the unusually congenial meeting in New York were three class-action lawsuits that have been filed by thousands of survivors against Swiss banks. Eizenstat noted that no outsiders can "control" those suits. But he said he hoped they could be consolidated in a "rational" way.

Meanwhile, a committee of 21 Swiss academics, writers and politicians unveiled another fund for Holocaust victims, saying it hoped to collect SF 1 million in its first stage.

The fund has already chosen two projects to support. One would benefit Jews in Minsk. The second would be for research at the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw, Reuters reported.

"Many people in our country share our view that Switzerland did not get through the years of [Hitler's] Third Reich and the Second World War with as much innocence as we had long believed," according to a statement issued by the committee, which included architect Mario Botta and Josef Candia, the retired Roman Catholic auxiliary bishop of Basel.

Allison Nazarian contributed to this report.



Forecast: Partly cloudy.

Survivors' last chance

The Swiss humanitarian fund may represent the last chance for compensation for Holocaust survivors in Eastern Europe, who have been shut out of German compensation programs for nearly 50 years.

The German government has resisted domestic and Jewish pressure to provide pensions for these survivors, despite increasing revelations that Bonn is paying billions of marks in

pensions to Waffen SS veterans and to alleged Nazi war criminals.

The SS pensions are higher than the amount of compensation proposed for survivors from the Eastern Bloc. However, the latest round of negotiations between Germany and the Claims Conference ended without an agreement to provide pensions to these survivors.

Marilyn Henry

Indian officials explore weapons purchases here

By STEVE RODAN

Senior Indian officials have been visiting military plants here, inspecting advanced defense systems as part of an effort to sign a large weapons deal with Israel, industry sources and officials said last week.

One of the officials, Defense Secretary T.K. Banjeri, inspected electronic and radar systems at defense plants. He was accompanied by senior officials of the Indian Air Force and Defense Ministry.

"There's good cooperation," a senior Israeli defense source said. "We expect that in 1997, there will be continuity of defense relations as well contracts signed." In December, India and Israel signed cooperation agreements in several fields, including technological research and development.

This is the second visit to Israel recently by a senior Indian defense official. In June, the chief Indian scientist at the Defense Ministry, Abdul Kalam, responsible for research and development, secretly visited and toured satellite and missile programs.

The visits were kept under wraps by the Defense Ministry and the Indian Embassy here. But defense sources in both countries acknowledged that Israel and India are considering a significant widening of their military ties.

"Generally things in India take a longer time than in other countries," said P.K. Kumaraswamy, a researcher at Hebrew University's Truman Institute. "The military establishment wants relations with Israel but the politicians in New Delhi are hesitating."

Industry sources said India is pursuing several contracts in India. One of them is the planned upgrade of several hundred T-72 tanks. Elbit Ltd., Haifa, and El-Op in Ness Ziona, have joined in a bid to provide the fire control system for the vehicle. Elbit would provide the computer and electronic systems and is the lead contractor.

The Truman Institute's Kumaraswamy said the Indian government is finding it difficult to make decisions regarding a significant upgrade in defense relations with Israel. One problem is the lack of funds for procurement programs. Another is India's wobbly ruling coalition, which has prevented decisions on sensitive subjects such as arms deals with Israel.

Industry sources said India has been unable to overcome the technical problems of producing several key defense systems. One example is unmanned air vehicle. Indian industries, they said, have produced UAVs, but they are of insufficient range for the military.

Israel has been steadily increasing the sale of military equipment to India, although officials refuse to release figures. Last year, Israel Aircraft Industries announced it had sold the Super Dvora Mark II attack boat to New Delhi.

In addition, IAI last year delivered Astra business jets to India. The company, along with BVR Technology, Givatayim, also sold the Ehud Air Combat Maneuvering Instrument to the Indian air force.

Kumaraswamy said that India is also seeking a maritime surveillance radar that could counter Pakistan's recent acquisition of PC-3 Orion radar from the US.



The city that can't breathe

Greenpeace activists wear gas masks as they hold a sign reading 'Air!' during a demonstration Friday against the high levels of noxious gases in Tel Aviv. The activists say the pollution is caused by the thousands of cars idling every day in the town's traffic jams.

(Reuters)

IDF: Diabetics count as disabled

By JUDY SEGEL

The Israel Defense Forces now recognizes soldiers in the regular army who developed diabetes within three months of undergoing severe stress as having been disabled by their military service. They may now receive benefits without having to take the IDF to court, which in the past has not recognized their claims.

This "breakthrough," which will affect dozens of young soldiers a year, was made possible by the deliberations of a committee of experts established at the initiative of Prof. Avi Karasik by the Defense and Health ministries. The committee was headed by Prof. Itamar Raz, a Hadassah-University Hospital diabetes expert and president of the Israel Diabetes Association. It also included Defense Ministry physicians who have in the past dismissed the idea that diabetes can develop as a result of stress during service. Dozens of young soldiers are mobilized after medical examinations find them healthy, and subsequently develop diabetes.

"Animal studies have clearly shown that severe stress, especially emotional pressure but also physical, can cause diabetes to develop in those susceptible to it," said Raz. "But it's impossible to prove this scientifically in humans. One would have to take 100 soldiers susceptible to diabetes, put half of them through severe stress such as getting shot, and then look at the results. Of course, we can't do this."

Soldiers diagnosed with diabetes have, until now, been discharged from the IDF without any benefits. IDF doctors argued they would have gotten diabetes even if they had not joined the military. Some have gone to court, spending NIS 20,000 on lawyers, and in most cases, their claims have not been recognized. Now, anyone who develops the disease within three months of undergoing severe stress will be recognized as having suffered a service-related "injury" and be eligible for compensation as a "disabled soldier."

Divorce up 5% in 1996

The number of divorces granted in 1996 was 8,195, up 5 percent over the previous year, and 16,902 couples filed for divorce, rabbinical courts director-general Rabbi Eliahu Ben-Dahan said last week.

He said there was an improvement in the situation of *agunot*, whose number stands at 21 today compared to 450 some years ago. This was due to dispatching detectives abroad to locate recalcitrant husbands. (Itim)

Actor Shmuel Segal dies at 72

Shmuel Segal, who performed at Habimah and other venues for 50 years, died yesterday at Tel Aviv's Ichilov Hospital of a stroke he had suffered the previous day. He was 72. Segal, who was born in Poland and came here as a child in 1934, played well over 100 roles in plays by Shakespeare, Chekhov, and Moliere, as well as by local playwrights. He was appearing in Shmuel Hasafri's *Shiva*, which is currently playing at Beit Liessin.

Princess Hotel's kosher certificate canceled

By HAIM SHAPIRO

The Eilat Rabbinical Council canceled the kosher certificate of the city's luxury Princess Hotel last week, in what a kosher official said was a blatant infraction by the hotel.

A hotel spokesperson called the move an attempt to use one incident to force a new policy on all Eilat hotels.

According to the present policy of the Chief Rabbinate, Eilat is the only place in Israel where a kosher hotel may have a non-kosher restaurant on its property. However, the restaurant must be physically separated from the hotel and have separate proprietors.

Dan Adam, head of the Eilat Religious Council's kosher division, said Thursday that there have been numerous infractions at the Princess. However, the straw that broke the camel's back occurred two weeks ago, when food from the non-kosher Chinese-Japanese restaurant was brought into the hotel proper.

Adam said the council is now demanding that the Chinese restaurant become kosher in order for the restaurant to regain its kosher certificate. Judy Meshulam, a member of the hotel management, admitted that the chief steward had brought a plate of food from the non-kosher restaurant into the hotel. However, she said, the council was using this isolated incident in order to force the Princess to make its Chinese restaurant kosher.

She maintained that this was part of a long-range policy to force all the Eilat hotels to make such restaurants kosher.

The hotel, she said, was continuing to keep kosher, although it had been forced to give a rebate to some of the guests who could not eat in the hotel in the absence of a certificate.

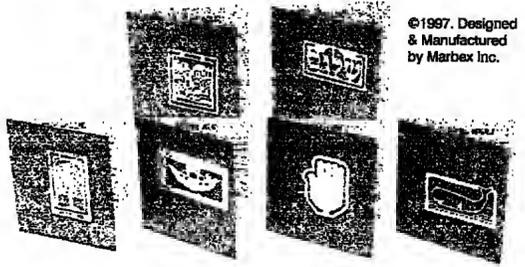
Meshulam said she could not estimate the financial damage to the hotel as a result of the lack of a kosher certificate. She said about 20 percent of the hotel's guests are observant.

"The longer this lasts, the greater the damage will be," Meshulam said.

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